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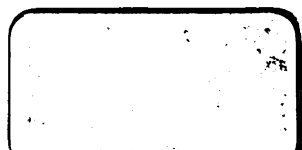
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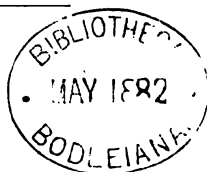
VERULAM DISTRICT CHURCH, LAMBETH, LONDON,

BY

THE REV. J. BATTERSBY,

VICAR OF ST. JAMES', SHEFFIELD.

SIXTH SERIES.



C. W. STIDSTONE,
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P R E F A C E .

THIS Small Volume contains the Sixth Series of Twelve Sermons preached in London. The aim of the Preacher has been to set forth "The Riches of God's Glory on the Vessels of Mercy which He had afore prepared unto Glory." The attention of the Reader is especially directed to Sermon No. 4, "Leaven which a Woman took," and to Sermon No. 8, "A Little Leaven Leaveneth the Whole Lump." These two Sermons have been both "condemned" and "commended" by persons who profess to be well informed upon the subject. Let the candid and impartial Reader carefully compare the contents of these Sermons with the infallible standard of "God's Word," "try the things that differ, and then approve the things that are excellent."

"Magna est Veritas, et Prævalebit."

"The Truth is Great, and will prevail."

J. B.

ST. JAMES'S VICARAGE, SHEFFIELD,

October, 1881.

“THE PROMISES OF GOD.”

A SERMON

PREACHED BY THE

Rev. J. BATTERSBY

(*Vicar of St. James', Sheffield*),

AT VERULAM MISSION CHURCH, KENNINGTON ROAD,
LAMBETH, LONDON.

THURSDAY EVENING, NOVEMBER, 4th, 1880.

*In the 2nd Epistle to the Corinthians the 1st chapter and
the 20th verse :—*

“FOR ALL THE PROMISES OF GOD IN HIM ARE YEA, AND
IN HIM AMEN, UNTO THE GLORY OF GOD BY US.”

The Apostle previously to writing this Epistle to the Corinthians had resolved to repeat his visit to them, and so give them a second benefit or grace in preaching the Gospel to them. “When I therefore was thus minded, did I use lightness?” Or did I make a rash resolution, and act with levity? “Or the things that I purpose, do I purpose according to the flesh?” Do I seek my own gratification and advantage, “that with me there may be yea, yea, and nay, nay?” Not so. Whatever resolution, determination, or promise I may have made to come to you, I made it subject to the Lord’s will. He calls God as a witness in the 18th verse. “But as God is true.” He is the faithful and true witness, and with Him there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. “Our word,” or our preaching, “was not yea and nay.” There was as absolute a certainty about it as there is about God Himself. It was not “yea” in the morning, and

"nay" in the evening. And when I promised to come to you, I did not say one thing and mean another, but hitherto I have been hindered from one cause or other. My purpose was subjected to the will of God. The Gospel preached to the Corinthians was not a contradictory one. It was all of a piece. "For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached unto you by us, even by me and Silvanus and Timotheus, was not yea and nay, but in Him was yea." It is as if he had said, there is no uncertainty in our preaching Jesus Christ. We do not say to you one thing to-day and another to-morrow. There is a consistency in what we say, "for if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?" If a minister preach a Gospel which is full of contradictions "*yeas*" and "*nays*," who shall understand the way of Salvation, and gird himself for the Christian conflict? The Gospel of the Grace of God is a Gospel of truth and certainty in Christ Jesus. "For all the promises of God in Him are yea, and in Him Amen, unto the glory of God by us."

Let us now consider our text:—First, "the Promises of God;" Secondly, their certainty, "In Him yea, and in Him Amen; and Thirdly, the end in preaching them. "Unto the Glory of God by us." If I have time, I shall conclude by pointing out to you the difference between an absolute and a conditional promise as contained in the Scriptures.

Consider first, "the Promises of God." What are we to understand by God's promises? I shall tell you what I understand by them. They are God's gracious declarations to bestow abundantly upon His people His manifold blessings. These promises often include temporal, spiritual, and eternal blessings. If we desire to have clear views of the promises we must search the Scriptures for therein are they contained. This is the only way of becoming intelligently acquainted with the promises.

Christ has been set up as the *Head* of the Church from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was.

(Proverbs viii. 23). It is *in Him*, as the *Head*, the Church has been blessed with every spiritual blessing. (Ephesians i. 3-6). It is well for us to get a comprehensive view of the whole scheme of salvation, which God has purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord. Hear the words of St. Paul to Timothy:—"God; who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling." Works are entirely excluded in the matter of salvation, except as *evidences* thereof. "Not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." God's purpose in Christ Jesus has been revealed in the fulness of time by the coming of the Son of God in the flesh. "But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, Who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel." (2 Tim. i. 9-10). When we consider the Son of God in His Divine and human relationships, He is a most *suitable* Person to be the Head and Representative of His people. He is the Father's Fellow and equal. He has one hand on Divinity as the Mighty God, and the other on humanity as the Holy One and the just. The fulness of the Godhead and the fulness of the manhood dwell in the wonderful Mediator, the man Christ Jesus. He is the image of the invisible God, and the Firstborn of every creature. He is the Creator, the Preserver, and the End of all things, "and He is the Head of the body, the Church. Who is the Beginning, the Firstborn from the dead; that in all things He might have the Pre-eminence. For it pleased the Father that in Him should all fulness dwell." "Christ is Head over all things to the Church." (Col. i. 15-19. Eph. i. 22).

Jehovah Father is spoken of as First purposing *in Himself* and then in Christ Jesus:—"Having made known unto us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He hath purposed *in Himself*." Christ is to be the One grand Centre of ingathering." That in the dispensation of the fulness of times He might gather together in One all things in Christ, both which

are in heaven, and which are on earth ; even in Him." Believers have their eternal inheritance *in Him*. (Eph. i. 9-11). How shall I enlarge upon this subject for the children of God? They have eternal life in Christ Jesus (Rom. vi. 23); they are Redeemed *in Him* (Rom. iii. 23); they are in a state of no condemnation *in Him* (Rom. viii. 1); they are called, justified, sanctified, and glorified *in Him*. "Moreover whom He did predestinate, them He also called ; and whom He called, them He also justified ; and whom He justified, them He also glorified." The believer has everything in Christ Jesus. When the Father gives His Son to a person, He freely gives all things with Him :—"For all the promises of God in Him are yea, and in Him Amen, unto the glory of God by us." I shall not linger any longer upon our first head, as I wish to dwell more particularly upon our second, and on this account I shall proceed :—

Let us now consider, secondly, the certainty of God's promises in Christ Jesus, "They are yea and in Him Amen." It is a very fair question to ask, what is the difference between the "Yea" and "Amen" promises in Christ? Did you ever think upon this subject carefully? Is there any spiritual teaching contained in the "Yea" and "Amen" promises in Christ? Or has the Holy Ghost spoken in vain? I think there is a difference, and I shall try to point it out to you. The great and grand Promise running through the Old Testament is Christ. All the promises of God are made to the children of God in Him, and are recorded for their comfort and encouragement in the Scriptures. The "Yea" of the Promise denotes its truth, but the "Amen" of the Promise denotes its actual accomplishment. You may take as a general illustration of the difference between the "Yea" and "Amen" Promise, the following :—The Old Testament is the "Yea" of the Promises, but the New Testament is the "Amen" of the Promises. I do not mean to say, that the Old Testament does not contain many Promises, which are both "Yea" and "Amen," that is, Promises made and

accomplished. The same is true also of many Promises in the New Testament. I simply throw out the illustration as a general one.

Christ is promised in the Old Testament as the "seed of the woman which is to bruise the serpent's head." This seed was to descend through Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. This seed was to be born of a virgin (Isa. vii. 14); and in a particular place, Bethlehem (Micah. v. 2); and at an appointed time. The sufferings and death of Christ were also foretold in the Old Testament. Now all this was the "*Yea*" of the Promise concerning Christ. But, if we turn to the New Testament, we have the "*Amen*" of the Promise in the actual accomplishment of those things which had been previously spoken. St. Paul says, the seed is Christ:—"Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ" (Gal. iii. 16). We turn to St. Matthew's Gospel and we frequently find him saying; "All this was done, that it might be *fulfilled* which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet." Read the following Scriptures:—Matthew i. 22-23; ii. 15-17-23. The *fulfilment* of a Promise is the "*Amen*" of the Promise, whether it concerns Christ or us.

Christ was "*Yea*" in the types of the Old Testament. He was figured forth by the PASCHAL LAMB in the 12th of Exodus. We turn to the New Testament and see the "*Amen*" as stated by the Apostles. "For even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us: therefore let us keep the feast." (1 Cor. v. 7-8). And again, "For these things were done, that the Scripture should be fulfilled. A bone of Him shall not be broken." (John xix. 36). The *Manna* which fell in the wilderness was a type of Christ. It was the "*Yea*" of Him. But when we read our Lord's words, we have the "*Amen*." "I am the living bread which came down from heaven, if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever; and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world." (John vi. 51.) The *Smitten*

Rock in Horeb, whence came water, that the people might drink, was the "*Yea*" of Christ. (Ex. xvii. 6). The "*Amen*" we have recorded in 1st Corinthians x. 4. "And did all drink the same spiritual drink; for they drank of that spiritual *Rock* that followed them; and that *Rock* was Christ." The *Mercy seat* was the "*Yea*" of Christ, for it was the meeting place of God and His people. (Ex. xxv. 22). The "*Amen*" is Christ Himself. God has set forth Christ to be a Propitiation, a *Mercy seat*, where He can meet with and bless the spiritual seed. (Rom. iii. 23). We are encouraged by the "*Amen*" truth of the Promise to draw near to God. "Let us therefore come boldly unto the Throne of Grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." I shall only add that familiar illustration the Brazen Serpent as lifted up in the wilderness. In the type you have the "*Yea*," in the antitype you have the "*Amen*." "For as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: That whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life." (John iii. 14-15). Here we might enlarge much, but we shall forbear.

Again, God has His "*Yea*" Promises in dealing with sin. "The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, and transgression and sin." The "*Amen*" of which is, when He speaks by His Spirit to the heart; "I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, *thy* transgressions, and, as a cloud, *thy* sins; return unto Me; for I have redeemed *thee*." The "*Yea*" of the promise is:—"I will put My laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more." The "*Amen*" of the Promise is: "I have written My laws in their hearts, and I have cast all their sins behind My back." The "*Yea*" of the Promise is:—"And all Thy children shall be taught of the Lord." The "*Amen*" of the Promise is:—"Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath

learned of the Father, cometh unto Me," saith Jehovah Jesus. (Isa. liv. 13. John vi. 45). Here we might go on shewing you the difference between the "Yea" and "Amen" of the promises of God in Christ. Perhaps I have said sufficient upon the subject to give you an idea of my meaning. Now, many of the Promises of God in Christ are to *some* of us only "Yea." In a short time they shall be "Amen." Indeed, there are many Promises in the Word of God, which are only "Yea," as yet, to us all. In a while they shall be "Amen." This is not our rest. Here we have no abiding city, but we seek one to come. The children of God shall come from the East, and from the West, and from the North, and from the South, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and with all the prophets in the Kingdom of God. We may only know the "Yea" of many Promises at present, but in due time, we shall be made to enjoy the "Amen" of them. "For so an entrance shall be ministered unto us abundantly into the Everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." Then we shall be able to say exultingly:—"All the Promises of God are to us in Christ Jesus "Yea" and in Him "Amen" to the glory of God the Father.

The Promises of God are described by St. Peter as being "*exceeding great and precious.*" "Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises." (2 Peter i. 4). They are exceeding great if we consider the Giver of them. The great God. They are exceeding great, also, if we consider the things promised. Take a few examples. "God promised *eternal life* before the world began." (Titus i. 2). "And this is the promise that He hath promised us, even *eternal life.*" (1 John ii. 25). Those who are the called of God receive "the promise of *eternal inheritance.*" (Heb. ix. 15). St. James says: "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation; for when he is tried, he shall receive the *crown of life*, which the Lord hath promised to them that love Him." (i. 12). And again he says: "Hearken, my beloved brethen, hath not God chosen

the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of *the kingdom* which He hath promised to them that love Him." (ii. 5). Are not these exceeding great Promises—eternal life, an eternal inheritance, the crown of life, of righteousness, and of glory. And as they are exceeding great in their *nature*, so they are in their *number*. Who shall count the number of the stars, then let him count the number of promises, temporal, spiritual, and eternal made to the saints in Christ Jesus! But these Promises are also very *precious*. Let us think for a moment. The Lord says:—"I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." (Heb. viii. 12). Is not this a precious Promise? I think it is. Take another, for God has said to His living children: "I will be their God, and they shall be my people . . . I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be My sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." (2 Cor. vi). Is not this a precious Promise? Well, take a cluster of them from the 46th of Isaiah:—"Hearken unto me, O house of Jacob, and all the remnant of the house of Israel, which are borne by me from the belly, which are carried from the womb; and even to your old age I am He; and even to hoar hairs will I carry you; I have made, and I will bear; even I will carry, and will deliver you." The Promises of God are in Christ "Yea," and through Him "Amen." What God has promised, He is faithful and able to perform. He is of one mind and His oath cannot be broken. Be of good cheer and fear not, for He will strengthen you, He will help you, He will uphold you with the right hand of His righteousness. Surely, the Promises of God are both exceeding great and precious. Before leaving this point, I shall quote a few *precious* Promises for the special comfort of those who feel weak in faith. The first is taken from the 42nd of Isaiah: "I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known; I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight.

These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them." Now, my beloved, is not this verse full of *precious* Promises? And there is no failure with God. All His Promises are certainties. You shall pass safely through the deep waters of trouble, and the fiery persecutions of the enemy, because Jehovah has said: "I will be with thee." Surely the Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and if so, what have they to fear? "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." Nay, in all things, the saints shall be more than conquerors through Christ who has loved them and saved them with an everlasting salvation. Oh! how *precious* are the Promises of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

In our prayers and approaches unto God, we are to plead the Promises. God promised to give the land of Canaan to the seed of Abraham. (Gen. xii. 7). Moses in his prayers and approaches unto God on behalf of Israel, pleaded, amongst other things, this particular promise. The people of Israel were most rebellious and stiff-necked. When Moses went up into the mount to receive the two tables of stone at the hand of God, the Israelites turned aside from the right way, and corrupted themselves by committing idolatry. Notwithstanding their wickedness, Moses besought the Lord and begged that He would not destroy them. He pleaded the Covenant Promise:—"Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, thy servants, to whom Thou swarest by thine own self, and saidst unto them, I will multiply your seed as the stars of heaven, and all this land that I have spoken of will I give unto your seed, and they shall inherit it for ever. And the Lord repented of the evil which he thought to do unto His people." I refer you to the prayer of Moses as it is given in the 32nd of Exodus, and as it is alluded to by him in the 9th of Deuteronomy. Solomon pleaded the promise of God as he stood before the altar of the Lord and prayed at the dedication of the temple. (1 Kings viii. 22-30). Whatever be the temporal good things which God has

promised to His servants in His Word, they have His own warranty in pleading them in their approaches unto Him. Our Lord said to his disciples :—"Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness ; and all these things (temporal things) shall be added unto you." Asaph, when in heart-trouble and overwhelmed in Spirit, says, "Will the Lord cast off for ever ? and will he be favourable no more ? Is His mercy clean gone for ever ? Doth His promise *fail* for evermore ? Hath God forgotten to be gracious ? Hath He in anger shut up His tender mercies ?" But then he adds :—"This is my infirmity." It is an infirmity and a sin to speak as if there could be the least failure in any of God's promises, be they temporal, spiritual, or eternal. I beseech you to search the oracles of God for those "exceeding great and precious promises," which He has made to believers of Spiritual and Eternal blessings, and then to plead the same in all your prayers at the throne of Grace. I am confident that our Lord's words will prove to be experimentally true : "Ask, and it shall be given you ; seek, and ye shall find ; knock, and it shall be opened unto you : For everyone that asketh receiveth ; and he that seeketh findeth ; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened." The children of God are certain to be heard and answered when they ask according to "HIS WILL."

Let me now say a word about *faith* and *hope* having to do with the Promises of God. *Faith* deals with the Promise in its "*Yea*" aspect, whilst *hope* deals with the Promise in its "*Amen*" aspect. We are told that "faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." Faith rests upon the Promise which God has made and this is the "*Yea*." Hope looks for the accomplishment of the Promise and this is the "*Amen*." To illustrate what I mean, take the Promise of God made to Abraham :—"Sarah shall have a son." All things in nature seemed against the Promise. But what did faith say ? It answered, "*Yea !*" "And being not weak in faith, he (Abraham) considered not his own body now dead, when he was

about a hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb: He staggered not at the Promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; And being fully persuaded that, what He had promised, He was able also to perform." (Rom. iv. 19-21). Here is the "*Yea*" of faith dealing with the Promise of God. "*Yea*," says, God's Promise is a certainty. "*Yea*," glorifies God. "*Yea*," says, He has all power in heaven and in earth, and He will keep His word, and never violate His oath. *Hope* looks for the fulfilment of the Promise. "We are saved by hope; but hope that is seen is not hope; for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it." (Rom. viii. 24-25). Faith believes the Promise as true and this is the "*Yea*." Hope waits with patience for the accomplishment of the Promise, and this is the "*Amen*." Take one or two examples more. Christ has said, "I will come again, and receive you unto Myself, that where I am, there ye may be also." Faith says, "*Yea*." This is a true saying. But to be "looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ" is the "*Amen*." This is the end of hope. God has promised new heavens and a new earth wherein shall dwell righteousness. Faith says "*Yea*." This is also a true saying of God. Hope looks for the fulfilment of the Promise. There is not a single Promise, which God has made to His believing people in Christ Jesus which has not its "*Yea*," and its "*Amen*" in Him. Every Promise shall be fulfilled. "For all the Promises of God in Him are *Yea* and in Him *Amen*." I hope you will have gathered my meaning from what I have said about faith and hope dealing with the Promises of God.

I shall now ask you to look at our third point, the end of preaching the Promises of God—"Unto the glory of God by us." The glory of God is revealed to us in the Person of His Son Jesus Christ. We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and why? "For God Who

commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." God's glory is to be seen in Christ—the glory of His grace, the glory of His power, the glory of His wisdom and goodness, and the glory of all His Promises. If we preach at all, it must be unto God's glory. And if we would glorify God, we must preach Christ as all in all. St. Paul preached Christ and Him crucified to the Corinthians, and this was unto the glory of God. He preached Him as made unto believers Wisdom, and Righteousness, and Sanctification, and Redemption, and this was unto the glory of God. He preached unto them the Promises of a glorious Resurrection and of a triumphant victory over sin, over death, and over the grave, and this was unto the glory of God. "Thanks be to God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." When we preach unto you the Promises of God whether they be taken from the Old or from the New Testament, the end is to glorify God. The Promises are made safe and secure to us in Christ, and we are made safe and secure in Him to the Promises. Believers and the Promises meet in Him. "Now He which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God." Here we have, not only confirmation, but consecration also—confirmed in Christ, and consecrated in Him to the service of God by His anointing spirit. "Who hath also sealed us"—marked us as His own property, which He claims for Himself as His peculiar treasure. The proof is this, He has "given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts." Here is a pledge which is to assure us of all the rest of grace here and of glory hereafter. The believer lives upon the Promises of God as God's absolute and unconditional certainties in Christ Jesus.

Now the Apostle says, "Unto the glory of God by us." This has a first reference to Paul, Silvanus, and Timotheus, who had preached the same glorious and blessed gospel to the Corinthians. In the 2nd chapter we read:—"Now thanks be unto God, which always

causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the Saviour of His knowledge by us in every place. For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved and in them that perish: To the one we are the savour of death unto death; and to the other the savour of life unto life. And who is *sufficient* for these things? For we are not as many, which corrupt the word of God: but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ." Again, the Apostle says, "Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God—Who also hath made us *able* Ministers of the New Testament; not of the letter, but of the Spirit: for the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life." *Ability* to preach the Gospel to the glory of God must come from Him. The Ministers of God are very weakness in themselves, but when they are qualified and endued with the Spirit from on high, then the weapons of their warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds—casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ. Such Ministers are wonderful. They go forth in a wonderful Name, filled with a wonderful Spirit, preaching a wonderful Gospel, with wonderful effects. They turn the world upside down. "Unto the glory of God by us." If a sinner be turned from darkness to light, give God the glory. If a child of God be comforted and encouraged by some exceeding great and precious promise, let God be glorified. If we preach, and our preaching be honoured, let us give all the glory to God. Yea more, whether we eat, or drink, or whatsoever we do, let us do all to the glory of God. May our doxology be: "To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and for ever, Amen."

In my opening remarks, I said, if I have time, I shall conclude by pointing out to you the *difference* between an *absolute* and a *conditional promise* as contained in the

Scriptures. An *absolute* promise runs thus:—"I will, and they shall." A *conditional* promise is:—"I will, if they will." I shall not trouble you with any thoughts of my own upon this subject, as I prefer reading to you a beautiful summary as given by John Bunyan in his "*Come, and welcome, to Jesus Christ.*" The verse on which he discoursed is in the 6th of John:—"All that the Father giveth me, shall come to me; and him that cometh to Me, I will in no wise cast out." I may venture to say that whenever Bunyan handled a subject fully, he did so in a masterly manner. The following is what he says:—

"We call that an absolute promise that is made without any condition; or more fully thus: That is an absolute promise of God, or of Christ, which maketh over to this or that man any Saving Spiritual blessing, without a condition to be done on our part for the obtaining thereof." "An absolute promise therefore is, as we say, without if or and; that is, it requireth nothing of us, that itself might be accomplished. It saith not, they shall, if they will; but they shall: not they shall, if they use the means; but, they shall."

The difference therefore between the *absolute* and *conditional* promise is this: (1) They differ in their terms. The absolute promises say, I will, and you shall: The other, I will, if you will: or, do this, and thou shalt live. (Jer. xxxi. 31-33; Ezek. xxxvi. 24-34; Heb. viii. 7-13; Jer. iv. 1; Ezek. xviii. 30-31-32; Matt. xix. 21.) (2) They differ in their way of communicating of good things to men; the absolute ones communicate things freely, only of grace; the other, if their be that qualification in us, that the promise calls for, not else. (3) The absolute promises therefore engage God, the other engage us; I mean God only, us only. (4) Absolute promises must be fulfilled; conditional may, or may not be fulfilled. The absolute ones must be fulfilled, because of the faithfulness of God, the others may not, because of the unfaithfulness of men. (5) Absolute promises have therefore a

sufficiency in themselves to bring about their own fulfillings ; the conditional have not so. The absolute promise is therefore a big-bellied promise, because it hath in itself a fulness of all desired things for us ; and will, when the time of that promise is come, yield to us mortals that which will verily save us ; yea, and make us capable of answering of the demands of the promise that is conditional. Wherefore, though there be a real, yea, an eternal difference in these things (with others) betwixt the conditional and the absolute promise ; yet again, in other respects, there is a blessed harmony betwixt them ; as may be seen in these particulars.

(1) The conditional promise calls for repentance, the absolute promise gives it. (Acts v. 30-31.) (2) The conditional promise calls for faith, the absolute promise gives it. (Zeph. iii. 12 ; Rom. xv. 12). (3) The conditional promise calls for a new heart, the absolute promise gives it. (Ezek. xxxvi.) (4) The conditional promise calleth for holy obedience, the absolute promise giveth it, or causeth it. (Ezek. xxxvi. 27.) And as they harmoniously agree in this, so again the conditional promise blesseth the man who by the absolute promise is endued with its fruit : as for instance : (1) The absolute promise maketh men upright ; and then the conditional follows, saying, " Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord." (Psalm cxix. 1). (2) The absolute promise giveth to this man the fear of the Lord ; and then the conditional followeth, saying, " Blessed is every one that feareth the Lord." (Psalm cxxviii. 1). (3) The absolute promise giveth faith, and then this conditional follows, saying, " Blessed is he that believeth." (Zeph. iii. 12 ; Luke i. 45). (4) The absolute promise brings free forgiveness of sins ; and then says the conditional, " Blessed are they whose transgressions are forgiven, and whose sin is covered." (Rom. iv. 7-8). (5) The absolute promise says, That God's elect should hold out to the end ; then the conditional follows with his blessings, " He that shall endure to the end, the same shall be

saved." (1 Peter i. 4-5-6 ; Matt. xxiv). Thus do the promises gloriously serve one another and us, in this their harmonious agreement."

Having now read to you Bunyan's discriminating account of the difference between absolute and conditional promises as contained in the Word of God, I feel, that it would be unwise on my part to add anything of my own upon the subject. May the God of all grace accompany with the Holy Spirit's blessing the word which has now been spoken, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen! and Amen!!

We bless Thee, O Thou great Amen !
Jehovah's pledge to sinful men,
Confirming all His word ;
No promises are doubtful then
For all are yea, and all amen,
In Jesus Christ our Lord.

Sweet ordinance of God to bless,
By Him the Lord our righteousness,
By Him, we say again ;
This mighty God made all things sure
Thro' life, in death, and evermore,
In Thee, the great Amen.

O faithful Witness of our God,
Who camest by water and by blood,
Proving the Holy One !
Thy record must for ever stand
Of life eternal from God's hand
To all in Thee, His Son.

Secured in this, the Church on high,
And all below, unceasing cry,
"Amen, amen, amen !"
To Thee, O Lord, all praise is given,
The loud response of earth and heaven ;
All hail, Thou great Amen !

Nor less above ye heavenly host,
To Father, Son, and Holy Ghost
Give praise, through Him, with men ;
For of Him, through Him, by Him, sure,
The Church shall glory evermore
In Him, the great Amen.

DR. HAWKER.

“HEIRS OF THE PROMISE.”

A SERMON

PREACHED BY THE

Rev. J. BATTERSBY

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AT VERULAM MISSION CHURCH, KENNINGTON ROAD,
LAMBETH, LONDON.

THURSDAY EVENING, DECEMBER, 2nd, 1880.

*In the 3rd chapter of St. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians
and at the latter part of the 29th verse :—*

“AND HEIRS ACCORDING TO THE PROMISE.”

The last time I was here, I addressed you upon the subject of the Promises of God. You will remember my text :—“For all the Promises of God in Him are yea, and in Him Amen, unto the glory of God by us.” I took a very general view of the Promises of God, shewing you, that they are God's manifold blessings made over to the Church in Christ, the Head and Representative of the spiritual seed. I stated also, that all the Promises of God are *absolute certainties* to those in union with Christ. They are all in Him, “Yea and Amen.” The *difference* between the “Yea and Amen” Promises in Christ, I illustrated by the Old and New Testament. Generally, the Old Testament may be regarded as the “Yea,” and the New Testament as the “Amen” of the Promises. *Prophecies* as they were originally delivered and remained unfulfilled, may be looked upon as the “Yea,” and their fulfilment as the “Amen” of the Promises. The *Types* also were the

"Yea," and the antitypes the "Amen" of the Promises. That God has His own way in dealing with sin. He promised to put it away, this was the "Yea," and when He had actually done so, this was the "Amen." That the Promises of God are "*exceeding great and precious*"—That they are to be *pleaded* in our *prayers* and *approaches* unto God. That *faith* and *hope* have to do with the Promises. *Faith* with the "Yea," and *hope* with the "Amen" of the Promise. That Ministers are to preach the Promises unto the glory of God, and that this was the practice of St. Paul and others. I then concluded by pointing out to you the *difference* between an *absolute* and a *conditional promise*, by reading to you a beautiful summary from John Bunyan upon the subject. I intend, this evening, to supplement what I then said to you, and for this purpose, I have chosen these words:—"And heirs according to the Promise."

First, what are we to understand by the Promise, or Promises of God in this chapter; secondly, the persons interested in the Promise, or Promises of God:—"Heirs according to the Promise;" and thirdly, what are the evidences of Sonship and Heirship? I think, if we deal with our subject after this threefold aspect of it, you will be able to gather sufficient to enable you to pursue it further for yourselves. I do not come to preach to you monthly for the purpose of detailing and "*hammering out*" a subject to its fullest extent, but rather to give you summaries of Divine truth, and so lead you to search the Scriptures more and more. And, I pray the Holy Ghost to guide us aright in our thoughts and words upon these important points, for Christ sake.

First then, what are we to understand by the Promise, or Promises of God in this chapter? We have the word Promise used in this chapter both in its singular and plural form. The "Promise is the Covenant of grace as a *whole*, whilst the "Promises of God" are the Covenant of grace unfolded from time to time in *detail*. I throw out this idea at the opening of my remarks, for I shall, most probably, use the words "Promise" and "Promises" indifferently meaning the same thing. In

speaking generally of the Promise, it is the same as the Covenant of grace, and stands in contrast with the Covenant of works. The Covenant of works was made with Adam as the Head of his family; but the Covenant of grace was made with Christ as the Head of His family. The Promises of the Covenant of grace were spoken of, unfolded, and declared to Abraham and his spiritual seed. "Now, to Abraham and his" spiritual "seed were the promises made," or spoken of. "He saith not, and to seeds, as of many; but as of one, and to thy seed, which is Christ." The great and grand Promise of eternal life had been previously made to Christ as the Representative of all His spiritual offspring. (Titus i. 2.) All believers, be they Jews or Gentiles, belong to the one spiritual seed of Christ. Indeed, Christ and His Church are the "*one seed*," and are here called, mystically, "Christ." We have an illustration of this truth, by the Apostle, taken from the human body. "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body; *so also is Christ*." (1 Cor. xii, 12). This is Christ mystical, or Christ and His Church. Again, the Promise is the same as the Gospel, and stands in contrast with the law. "And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the Gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed. So then, they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham." (Verses 8 and 9). The Covenant of grace which God had confirmed before in Christ, could not be disannulled by the law, that it should make the Promise or Gospel of no effect. The inheritance of eternal life and glory is not by the law, but by the Gospel. St. Paul reasons, that if it were by the law, then it would not be by Promise; but, God has given it by Promise in Christ, and discovered the same to Abraham and to his spiritual descendants. And thus, it is clearly manifest that the eternal inheritance is altogether of grace, to the end the Promise might be *sure* to all the seed spiritual of Abraham. (Rom. iv. 16).

If there be a Promise, there must of necessity be a PROMISER. Now, Who is the *Promiser*? The answer will include Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. "The Promises of God." "All the Promises of God." (iii. 21.; 2 Cor. i. 20). The Promises of God in Christ, are God's manifold blessings made over to us in Christ. The Holy Ghost is the great Expounder and Applier of them to our souls, hence, He is called the "Promise of the Father." (Acts i. 4). Christ is also the Promiser. When he appeared upon earth, God manifest in the flesh, He made many Promises to His disciples. He promised rest to the weary and heavy laden. (Matt. xi. 28). He promised the Holy Ghost to be a Reprover, an infallible Teacher and Guide, the Glorifier of Himself, and the Comforter of His people. (John xiv. xv. xvi). The Holy Ghost is the Promiser too. He is the Holy Spirit of Promise. What is the Word of God itself but the word of the Spirit. The Holy Ghost witnesses that He will not only put, but write the gracious laws of the Covenant of grace in the hearts of the children of God. (Heb. viii). The Spirit is the Inditer of, and speaks in all the Promises. When we read the Promises recorded in the Scriptures, let us try to remember the *threefold* Promiser of them. Our Father made them to us in Christ; and Christ came down from heaven to declare them afresh and to ratify them by His blood; and now the Holy Ghost is continually speaking to us by the word.

Let us now see what constitutes the Sum and Substance of the Promise? I venture to say that you will never get a better answer to this question than what was said of Levi: "The Lord is his inheritance, according as the Lord thy God promised Him." (Deut. x. 9. Num. xviii. 20). The Lord has engaged Himself in Covenant Promise to His people, saying, "I will be to them a God, and they shall be to Me a people." (Heb. viii. 10). The magnitude of this Promise, I fail to grasp in its fulness. God in Christ is all to His people. The sum of the Promise is seen again in such words as these:—"I will give THEE," this is Christ Who is given, "I will

give ~~THEE~~ for a Covenant of the people for a light of the gentiles—that Thou mayest be My salvation unto the end of the earth.” (Isah. xlii. and xlix. ; Acts xiii. 47). In Christ all fulness dwells. Fulness of grace, fulness of wisdom and knowledge, fulness of love and power. Oh for a glimpse of the unsearchable riches which are laid up in Christ for them that love Him. Eternity will never exhaust the treasures which are hid in Him. But, blessed be God, those who have Christ have all. “All things are yours,” and why? Because, “ye are Christ’s, and Christ is God’s.” The Holy Spirit is also concerned in the *substance* of the Promise. He is the Spirit of the Father and the Spirit of Christ. He is the Spirit of truth, the Spirit of holiness, the Spirit of grace and supplication, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord, the Spirit of Promise, and the Spirit of glory. The Spirit of the Lord infuses life and light into the Promise and Promises of the Covenant of Grace. The Spirit’s gracious operations are felt and experienced in the hearts of the children of God. Where the Spirit of the Lord is at work in the heart, there you may expect to discover His gracious fruits. Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there you have true liberty and love, and joy and peace, and such like. From what I have now said, you will be able to gather the Spirit’s part in the Substance of the Promise and Promises.

We shall now notice some of the excellencies of the Promise. In my last Sermon I mentioned some of the *excellencies* of the Promises of God. I shewed you that they are exceeding great and precious, free and unconditional. “Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises.” I shall not repeat what I then said, but I shall add a few things to illustrate further the *excellencies* of the Promises. The Covenant of grace is established upon “better promises” than the Covenant which was made with Israel when they came up out of the land of Egypt. (Heb. viii. 6). The Covenant with Israel was estab-

lished chiefly upon *temporal* Promises, whilst the Covenant with Christ is established upon *spiritual* and *eternal* Promises. Hence, the Promises of the new and better Covenant are called "better promises." These "better promises" are revealed to us in the Gospel of God, and are Promises of "*mercy*." (Luke i. 72). "I will make an everlasting Covenant with you, even the *sure mercies* of David," or of Christ the Beloved, Whom the Father has given for a witness to the people, a leader and commander to the people. (Isa. lv. 3. 4). These "better promises" are Promises of *kindness* which will never fail. "With everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer. . . . The mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the Covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee." (Isa. liv. 8-10). These "better promises" are *sure* and *certain* to all the spiritual seed. (Rom. iv. 16; 2 Cor. i. 20). These "better promises" are full of hope. Dearly beloved, we are strangers and pilgrims in a strange country, but we desire a better country, even a heavenly country. We are looking for an abiding city in that better land which hath foundations, whose Builder and Maker is God. These "better promises" are full of *glory*. We are to be like Christ. Glorified together with Him. "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory." (Col. iii. 4). At times, here upon earth, we enjoy much of the sweetness and goodness of the "better promises," but when we shall appear in the kingdom of our God in glory, then, I believe, we shall be disposed to exclaim like the Queen of Sheba:—"Behold, the half was not told me."

Let us consider secondly the persons interested in the promise. "Heirs according to the Promise." "Heirs of Promise." "Children of Promise." "The children of the Promise are counted for the seed." It is in this way the persons interested in the Promise and Promises of God are described in the Scriptures. An heir is one who succeeds to a portion or lot. I hardly need say

this to you. Now, the *distinction* between the children of the Promise and the children of the flesh is very carefully pointed out by the Apostle in the 9th of Romans. "They are not all Israel which are of Israel." I understand this to mean, that persons may have descended from natural Israel or Jacob, and yet not belong to the spiritual Israel or children of God. He then illustrates the difference between those who are the children of Promise and those who are not by the descendants of Abraham:—"Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, in Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of Promise are counted for the seed." Isaac is the chosen seed of Promise, and not Ishmael. And in the case of Rebecca's two sons Jacob is preferred to Esau. God's purpose of election stands in grace and not in works. The children of Promise are those respecting whom God has said, "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercies." Compare what I have now said with the 4th of Galatians from the 22nd verse to the end of the chapter, and I think, you will then be at no loss in understanding who are "the children of God," and "heirs according to the Promise."

The heirs of Promise are spoken of as "*the children of the living God.*" They are vessels of *mercy* prepared unto glory. "And it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them ye are not my people; there shall they be called the children of the *living God.*" (Rom. ix. 26). There are those who are "children of Belial," "children of the devil," and children of darkness and disobedience. But those who are children of the *living God*, have God for their Father *dwelling* in them, and *assuring* them that He will be their God, and that they shall be His people. If the *living God* dwell in them, then they are *living* children, and if *living* children, they have been made *alive* unto God in Christ

Jesus. There is a marked and distinctive difference between the children of the living God and the carnal children of this world. May the Spirit of the living God help us carefully to discriminate between the two, and see to which class we belong.

The heirs of Promise are children of God by *adoption*. God in love has predestinated them unto adoption by Jesus Christ unto Himself according to the good pleasure of His will. (Eph. i. 5). The word for adoption means "placed as a son." This is the position or standing which God gives to all those whom He saves through His Natural and Only Begotten Son Jesus Christ. This adoption or being placed in the position of sons is the outcome of God's great love. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." (1 John iii. 1). This is amazing love, great love, free love, unchangeable and everlasting love. When God gave us the position of sons, it was not because of our merit, but because of His sovereign love displayed towards us in and through Christ Jesus.

The heirs of Promise are *redeemed* children. It must never be forgotten that the heirs of Promise fell in Adam with all the rest of mankind. They are by nature wrathful, angry, rebellious, disagreeable children even as others. The children are partakers of flesh and blood. "But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law." What for? "To redeem them that were under the law." That is, as I understand it, to redeem them that were under the law of Redemption. "That we might receive the adoption of sons." That we might be made to realize our position as sons of God. "And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying Abba Father. Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ." (Gal. vi).

The heirs of Promise are children of God by a *new birth*. I do not mean by a "new birth" what some persons call "baptismal regeneration." No! No!!

My meaning is well expressed in the words of Scripture. "Of His own will begat He us with the word of truth." (James i. 18). God has begotten us again. This is the new birth. It is a sovereign act on His part. "Of His own will." The means employed is the word of truth, or the glorious Gospel. These persons have the privilege of the sons of God given to them. They believe on the Name of the Only begotten Son of God. They are born again, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. (John i. 11-13).

The heirs of Promise are children of God *by faith* in Christ Jesus. Faith was never the Saviour of any person yet. I said this to a person the other day, and he felt rather shocked at my rashness. Now, I cannot always stop to explain my sayings; but I must just offer a word or two of comment upon this point. Faith, if it be of the right sort *accompanies salvation*, and hence we speak of "*saving faith*." This is the spiritual eye which sees Jesus and glories in His Blood and Righteousness. Faith does not make persons children of God, but it evidences that they are the children of God. It is the Spirit's *proof* in them that they are not depending upon an arm of flesh for salvation, but upon the Lord Jesus Christ. "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ." By Baptism here, we are not to understand the ordinance of water Baptism, (against which I have not a word to say), but the Holy Spirit's Baptism as in 1. Corinthians xii. 13. "For by one spirit are we all baptized into one body," the Church, the Head of which is Christ. Thus baptized, Christ is put upon us as our Righteousness, Sanctification, and Salvation. All sects, distinctions, and parties are levelled in Him. Whatever will those persons do who are living by their sects and their parties? There is but one sect in Christ, and it is that sect which is everywhere spoken against. "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free; there is neither male nor female: for ye are *all one* in Christ Jesus." These are indeed the children of God,

the children of the kingdom, the children of light and of the day, the children of liberty, and the children who shew forth the praises of Him Who has called them out of darkness into His marvellous light. Oh! that we may know each other only in Christ. All believers are *one in Him*.

There is a *striking resemblance* between Isaac and the heirs of Promise. "Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the heirs of Promise." (Gal. iv. 28). Isaac was the child of Abraham. So are all believers. "Know ye therefore, that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham." "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed," or children. (iii. 7. 29). Isaac was the child of Promise. So are all believers. They are a chosen generation and a peculiar people. They are the "heirs according to the Promise." There was *great joy* when Isaac was born. God made Sarah to laugh and all that heard laughed with her. This was their rejoicing at the birth of the child of promise. (Gen. xxi. 6). There is great rejoicing in heaven and on earth when an heir of glory is born. But, if there be some to rejoice, there will also be others to *mock*. Ishmael "*mocked*." (Gen. xxi. 9), His conduct is thus described: "But as then he that was born after the flesh *persecuted* him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now." (iv. 29). And it will continue to be so even unto the coming again of the Son of God. Yea, until the last vessel of mercy has been taken to heaven and glory.

Now God made a Promise to Abraham that he should be "*the heir of the world*." (Rom. iv. 13). But what does this mean? We read in the 17th of Genesis. God said to Abram: "Behold, My covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be the father of a multitude of nations. Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee." Abraham was to be a wonderful person in the world. Christ was to spring from him in whom all the nations of the earth were to be blessed. Abraham and his seed were to possess the

land of Canaan as a pledge of all the rest. He sojourned in the land of Promise, as in a strange country, for he had his eye upon another country, a better country, a heavenly country. (Heb. xi.) This is the world to come, the everlasting inheritance of the saints. (Heb. ix. 15; Col. i. 12). Abraham stood out prominently in the Old Testament as the heir of this heavenly inheritance. But all Abraham's spiritual seed are heirs also of the same Promise, kingdom, and glory. Now it is said, that God has appointed His Son to be *the Heir of all things.*" (Heb. i. 2). Let us see our connection with Him for His interest is our interest. The Holy Ghost witnesses with our spirits that we are the children of God. And, if this be so, what then? "And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ." (Rom. viii. 17). Is not this a large portion? What more can the child of Promise desire, than to be an heir of God? All things belong to him, for he is Christ's, and Christ is God's. God has made all things *doubly sure* to the heirs of Promise: "Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of Promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath: That by *two immutable things,*" His counsel and oath, "in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us." "Looking unto Jesus the Author and Finisher of our faith: Who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." What a glorious world to come! What an incorruptible inheritance! Well, all believers are made heirs according to the hope of eternal life. (Heb. xii. 2; Titus iii. 7).

I shall now in the third place point out to you some of the evidences of our sonship and heirship. We read of the "Promise of the spirit" and of "the Holy Spirit of Promise." (Eph. i. 13). The Holy Spirit unfolds the covenant of grace, He explains Christ to the believer, and dwells in the heart as an earnest of the inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession—

which is the redemption of the Church—unto the praise of His glory. This Holy Spirit of Promise manifests Himself in divers ways in His gracious operations in the children of God, or heirs of promise. I shall mention some of the *evidences* of heirship and sonship.

Where the Holy Spirit of Promise *dwells*, there is "the Spirit of *wisdom* and *revelation* in the knowledge of Him." (Eph. i. 17). It is in the knowledge of Jesus Christ, that persons are made wise unto salvation. It is life eternal to know Christ. The Apostle counted all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus the Lord. They only are true philosophers who are in the enjoyment of Christ as the wisdom of God. But they have Wisdom and Revelation in the knowledge of Him. When God called Paul by His grace, He revealed His Son *to him* and *in him*. (Gal. i. 16). God does this by His Spirit. (1 Cor. ii. 10). Has the Spirit given you the knowledge of Christ? Has He revealed Christ in you? Are you wise in Christ? If so, then you have one of the evidences that you are children of God and heirs according to the Promise. Be assured of this, there is no knowledge like the knowledge which the Holy Ghost gives us of Christ.

Again, where the Holy Spirit of Promise *dwells*, there you have the spirit of *grace* and *supplication*, or of *true prayer*. "I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplication: and they shall look upon Me Whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for Him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for Him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn." (Zech. xii. 13). By the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, we are to understand the children of God. In this verse there is promised the outpouring of the spirit of God. He will come as the Spirit of grace, that is, He will produce in their hearts His gracious fruits of love and joy and peace and such like. He will come also as the Spirit of supplication. This is when He draws our petitions for us and helps our

infirmities, for without Him we know not what to pray for as we ought. Faith and godly sorrow are among the effects of the Spirit. They shall *look* upon Him Whom they have pierced. This looking is the spiritual eye of faith which fastens upon Christ the Crucified One. And as Christ is realized in the heart, there will be real repentance unto life, mourning and weeping and felt bitterness for iniquity, transgression, and sin. Has your experience been such as that described in this verse? if so, then you have a good evidence that you are amongst the children of God and heirs according to the Promise.

Now take another evidence of being an heir according to the Promise. The Spirit of Promise is "the Spirit of *holiness*." (Rom. i. 3). When the Spirit of holiness dwells within, then, there will be a manifested holiness in the outward life. God says, "I will dwell in you . . . and I will be a Father unto you." And what then? "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting *holiness* in the fear of God." (2 Cor. vii. 1). This is the Christian man's walk and conversation regulated by the Word and Spirit. Have you this evidence of *holy walking*? Have you experienced this inward and outward cleansing? If you have, it is a very good sign that you are children of God and heirs according to the Promise.

Another evidence is this, that where there is the Spirit of Promise, there is the Spirit of *power*, and of *love*, and of a *sound mind*." (2 Tim. i. 7). The spirit of *power* throws down oppositions arising from the carnal mind. The Spirit of *power* is seen in dealing with the adversaries of the Lord and His Saints. The Christian goes forth, not in his own strength, but in the strength of the Lord of hosts. He knows that he is a conqueror, not by his own might, nor by his own power, but by the *power* of the Spirit. His strength is in the Lord, and in the power of His might. And he has the Spirit of *love*. This love is shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost, and goes out towards God and towards

the people of God. And there is the Spirit of a *sound mind*. Persons in their unregenerate state are not of sound mind. They are like the man with the unclean spirit, who had his dwelling among the tombs, and who could not be bound with chains. But when the unclean spirit is cast out of man, then, he sits at the feet of Jesus as a token of his humility; then, he is clothed in the white raiment of the Son of God; then he is in his right mind, for he has the mind of Christ, which is indeed a sound mind. Have we this evidence of our sonship and heirship? Can we subscribe to the words of the Apostle? and say, "But we have the mind of Christ."

Again, where the Spirit of Promise is, there is the Spirit of *conflict*. This evidence is clearly stated in these words:—"For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye *cannot* do the things that ye would." (Gal. v. 17). This spiritual conflict is more largely described in the 7th of Romans. There is one law in the members which is always warring against the law of the mind. The natural man is in perpetual conflict with the spiritual man. The spiritual is constantly mourning over the natural. Do you know anything of this conflict? Do you feel the new man in you desiring and panting after high and holy things? And do you feel the old man present with you fully bent upon evil and evil things? If this be so, then you have an evidence that you are children of God and heirs according to the promise. You may try to creep away from the world and its temptations, you may enter a secret closet, chamber, or monastery for retirement, but you will not escape the conflict. And why? because you will carry with you into your seclusion your evil and corrupt heart. Blessed are you, if you know that you have *two hearts*. The new and the old in conflict.

Let me give you another evidence. Now, where the Spirit of Promise is, there is the Spirit of *glory*. "If ye be reproached for the Name of Christ, happy are ye; for the Spirit of *glory* and of God resteth upon you."

(1 Peter iv. 14). This Spirit of glory resting upon a person causes him to glory in God through Jesus Christ our Lord. He who glories has to glory in the Lord. The Christian does not glory in his own wisdom, might, and riches, but in this, that he understands and knows the Lord as exercising loving kindness and tender mercies towards him. He rejoices in hope of the glory of God. He glories in God when he is in the midst of tribulations. But then, if he does so, it is that the power and glory of Christ may rest upon him. Can we, like the Apostle, say from the heart? "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." If we have this evidence, we are children of God and heirs according to the Promise. Our glorying in God is the result of the Holy Ghost, having glorified Christ in us.

The last evidence which I shall name is this. Where the Spirit of Promise is, there is the Spirit of *liberty* and the Spirit of *praise*. Now, "where the spirit of the Lord is, there is *liberty*." This is liberty in Christ. Liberty from the curse of the law—and liberty to worship God in spirit and in truth. Hence the believer has the Spirit of *praise*. The Lord has given him beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of *praise* for the spirit of heaviness. (Isa. lxi). Being endued with so excellent a spirit, he is able to shew forth the high praises of God for His marvellous loving kindness and tender mercies. The saints are called upon to praise the God of their salvation:—"Praise ye the Lord; for it is good to sing praises unto our God; for it is pleasant; and praise is comely." (Psm. 147th). Have you this evidence of the Spirit of *liberty* and the spirit of *praise*? "Wherefore understand what the will of the Lord is. . . . And be filled with the Spirit; speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ." (Eph. v. 17-20).

Now, my dearly beloved, are you able to gather up any of the christian evidences which I have named? You may not be able to say, well, I have them all, I have experienced everything you have said. But be it known unto you for your own comfort, that if you are only enabled by the Holy Spirit to realize in your own souls *one* or *two* of the evidences which I have given you, it is because your names are written in the Book of life, and to heaven and glory you will go!!

“ Praise God, from Whom all blessings flow ;
 Praise Him, all creatures here below ;
 Praise Him above, ye heavenly host ;
 Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.”

Amen ! and Amen !!

O my distrustful heart,
 How small thy faith appears !
 But greater, Lord, Thou art
 Than all my doubts and fears :
 Did Jesus once upon me shine ?
 Then Jesus is for ever mine.
 Unchangeable His will,
 Whatever be my frame ;
 His loving heart is still
 Eternally the same :
 My soul through many changes goes,
 His love no variation knows.
 Thou, Lord, wilt carry on,
 And perfectly perform,
 The work Thou hast begun
 In me, a sinful worm :
 'Midst all my fears, and sin, and woe,
 Thy Spirit will not let me go.
 His rich and sovereign grace.
 At first did freely move :
 I still shall see Thy face,
 And feel that God is love :
 My soul into Thine arms I cast,
 I know I shall be saved at last !

HAMMOND 1745; TOPLADY 1776.

“GOLD TRIED BY FIRE.”

A SERMON

PREACHED BY THE

Rev. J. BATTERSBY

(*Vicar of St. James', Sheffield*),

AT VERULAM MISSION CHURCH, KENNINGTON ROAD,
LAMBETH, LONDON.

THURSDAY EVENING, JANUARY, 6TH, 1881.

*In the 3rd chapter of the Book of Revelation, and at the
18th verse :—*

“I COUNSEL THEE TO BUY OF ME GOLD TRIED IN THE FIRE, THAT THOU MAYEST BE RICH ; AND WHITE RAIMENT, THAT THOU MAYEST BE CLOTHED, AND THAT THE SHAME OF THY NAKEDNESS DO NOT APPEAR ; AND ANOINT THINE EYES WITH EYE-SALVE, THAT THOU MAYEST SEE.”

The text is a portion of the Epistle of our Lord to the pastor or angel of the Church in Laodicea.

Laodicea was once a famous and flourishing town with its Christian Church, but now, it is a heap of ruins. It is literally true what is stated in this Epistle that both the City and the Church of that place have in judgment been spued out of God's mouth. St. Paul had a great conflict on behalf of the Laodicean Christians, for when he wrote to the Colossians, he spoke of them thus :—
“I would that ye knew what great conflict I have for you, and for them at Laodicea, and for as many as have not seen my face in the flesh.” (2nd Colossians i.)

There are several things in common in all the Epistles to the seven Churches in Asia. They are all addressed to the angel, pastor, or president of the Church :— They are all sent by our Lord. St. John is

the instrument employed in writing them : and the Holy Ghost is the Guide and Director. So we may fairly conclude, that we have infallible truth contained in these Epistles. Our Lord says : " I know thy works." This is a characteristic mark of Him as He is Jehovah ; and as Jehovah He knows all *our* works as well as theirs. But there are some distinctive peculiarities connected with each of the Churches, and these, we might dwell upon at some length. In looking over the 14th verse, we read that it is said " and unto the angel of the Church of the Laodiceans write ; these things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God." There are three titles given to the Son of God in this verse. " The Amen," we may have a word to say about this hereafter, meanwhile read Isaiah lxxv., verse 16. He is described as " the faithful and true Witness." And He is also " the Beginning of the Creation of God," that is, the Head of the Creation. He is placed " far above all principality, and power," and is " the Head over all things to the Church." (Ephesians i. 21 and 22). Jehovah Jesus speaking in keeping with these titles, says :— " I know thy works that thou art neither cold nor hot : I would thou wert cold or hot." This is the awful state into which this Church had lapsed in the short time of thirty years between St. Paul's conflict for it, and St. John writing to it. Jesus says :— " I would thou wert cold or hot." But " because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of My mouth." Many a professing Church has been spued out of Jehovah's mouth, since that of Laodicea. God's children are never spued out of His mouth, but a professing Church may be. There is a marked difference between a mere professing Church, and those who are the true and living members of Christ. When the candlestick ceases to hold forth the light, it is no longer of any use, and may safely be removed. It was so with the Candlestick of Laodicea. " Because thou sayest I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing ; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind,

and naked." You have a saying amongst you, at least, we have in the north, that pride and ignorance generally go together. You have the two combined in this verse. And I think you will find it as a rule that those who boast most of their religion have generally the least real religion. But those who know most of themselves and of their emptiness and unworthiness, are those who think most of Christ and of His all-sufficiency. The professing Christians in the Church of Laodicea had a very high opinion of themselves. They thought they were rich, increased in goods, and had need of nothing. And there are many professors at the present day who can give a shake of the head, and a look most pious and knowing, and a "thank God I am not as other men are." The words of our Lord in our text are words of tenderness, compassion, and sympathy. As such we shall treat them. "I counsel thee to buy of Me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eye-salve, that thou mayest see." My text is a large one, indeed, much larger than those I generally preach upon. I shall therefore have to touch it lightly.

I shall ask you to look at it thus: First, the Counsellor and the Counsellor; Secondly, the counsel given; and Thirdly, the terms: "buy of Me." I shall then probably conclude, if I have time, by connecting this verse with the remaining part of the Epistle, and especially with the 20th verse, which is often quoted by carnal religionists for carnal ends and creature purposes.

I shall ask you to look in the *first place* at the *Counsellor*, and the *Counsellor*. I need not stop to explain to you Who is here meant by the Counsellor. The Lord Jesus Christ is speaking. And when I speak of Him I mean Jehovah Jesus. I mean God manifest in the flesh, is the Counsellor. He is the Lord of Hosts. These are different expressions to convey the same idea. And the reason why I do this is, because there is such a tendency in the day in which we live to

lower the dignity and greatness of the Son of God.

The Lord Jesus Christ is a *suitable* Person to be the Counsellor between God and man. He is described in the 9th of Isaiah, and the 6th verse as "a child" "born," and "a Son given," Who shall be the Wonderful Counsellor, and the Mighty God; He shall plead the cause of the helpless and needy. Jehovah Jesus is Wonderful in His Person. He is equal to the Father as touching His Godhead, and He has also taken humanity into Divine union with Himself. This is Wonderful. Job wished for a Daysman that could put His hand upon both. For he said:—"If I wash myself with snow water, and make myself never so clean; yet shalt Thou plunge me in the ditch, and mine own clothes shall abhor me. For He is not a man as I am, that I should answer Him, and we should come together in judgment. Neither is there any Daysman betwixt us, that might lay His hand upon us both." (Job ix. 30-33). Blessed be God, there is a Daysman now! It is Jehovah Jesus the Mighty God and the Wonderful Counsellor. As God He lays His Hand upon Divinity, and as man He lays His Hand upon humanity. He is a *suitable* Person to undertake the cause of His clients. He possesses every qualification to fit Him for His high and holy office. In Him are hid all treasures of wisdom and knowledge and power. (Col. ii. 3).

Jehovah Jesus cannot be deceived in pleading the Christian's cause. He knows all about it: and He will make no mistake in the management of it. He has all wisdom. He knows when to speak and how to speak. He will never fail in His undertaking, for all power in heaven and in earth is given unto Him. So that a poor sinner, awakened by the Holy Spirit to know himself, draws near to God, and knows that he has an Advocate, even a Comfortable Advocate and a Wonderful Counsellor with the Father, Who can speak a word in season for him in heaven, and Who can also speak a word from heaven, in season, to his sorrowful and heavy laden soul. Jehovah Jesus, as the Wonderful Counsellor, has shown us how well He could dispute

when He was here upon earth. At twelve years of age we find that He entered into the Temple and astonished the doctors with His questions and answers. The Holy Child Jesus must be about His Father's business. The time arrived when He should appear upon the battlefield with Satan. A terrible conflict ensued. Satan tempted the Son of God with His lying offers. "All these things will I give Thee, if Thou wilt fall down and worship me." The wisdom and knowledge of Christ are triumphant, for He vanquished Satan with the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. The Wonderful power of Jehovah Jesus appears in the Miracles which He wrought; in the death which He died; in His Resurrection from the dead; in His Ascension to heaven and glory, and as He now sits down on the right hand of the Majesty on high. This Wonderful Person with loving sympathy looks down from heaven upon the "little ones" and "the needy ones," saying; "*I counsel thee.*" This is our Counsellor, Jesus Christ the Righteous. Has He spoken a word in season to your weary souls. If so, to you there is no Counsellor on earth, or in heaven, like Jehovah Jesus.

Again, the *persons* counselled are the *wretched, miserable and poor, and blind, and naked*. These are the characters described. These persons were professing Christians. They said that they were rich, and increased with goods and had need of nothing. They were not literally so, but they were proud professors. And there are many such now both preachers and hearers. Would to God there were fewer. There is too much magnifying of the creature and of what it can do for Christ, and too little said of what Christ has done, or is doing for the perishing sinner. Some one may say: "Are you opposed to good works, then?" Not I indeed. But they can only be good works when their performers are united to the Lord Jesus Christ vitally and spiritually by the Holy Ghost. The soul of a man then becomes spiritually influenced, and his thoughts, and words, and works, go in the right direction. This is the way grace affects a person.

The persons mentioned in our text are said to be in "need of nothing." Why they must have belonged to those who call themselves "*the fully sanctified*." Beloved, I hope we are fully sanctified. But our sanctification is not in ourselves, nor in self-boasting; but in the Lord who is made unto us sanctification. Well, what does our Lord say about these persons? "And knowest not that thou art wretched." It is a good thing to know that we are wretched. This is one of the marks of those who are truly awakened to a sense of sin. Wretched! They have wretched hearts, and they have a wretched time with themselves. They feel wretched before God, and cry out: "Oh! God in mercy, look upon my wretched soul!" Some one may say, "I have never felt wretched." But you will in some degree feel so, before you go to heaven. They are generally made miserable, before they are made happy. I dare say, there are some in this congregation who will say: "I have never passed through that process, and yet, I am very happy in my religion." Well do not boast too much. The time may come when you will feel "miserable" enough. God may strip you of everything, even of your comforts of religion, and that too, when you feel to need them most. This may come to you on a sick bed where you may feel more miserable in soul than afflicted in body. It is a sorrowful experience to feel that your very religion seems to fail you when you are in the deepest trial. How does a person feel under such circumstances? Is he not miserable? Still, the Lord will do him no harm. He will watch over His child in the furnace. In all the afflictions of His people, He is afflicted. His words of counsel and comfort shall be heard in due season.

"*And poor.*" These Laodicean Christians thought they were rich. Our Lord knew they were poor. It is a blessed thing for us to see ourselves as the Lord sees us. A true sense of our spiritual poverty is a gift which comes from heaven. If we are poor, and feel that we are so, we shall be disposed to become beggars. There is no shame or disgrace in begging, and especially in

begging from God. Hear what is said of these poor : "Blessed are the poor in spirit : for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." They are rich after all, are they not ? It is to these poor, the poor in spirit, the Gospel is preached. And it is to these poor all the riches in heaven belong.

"*And blind,*" I presume that some of us are comparatively blind. We do not all see "afar off." How can we ? "We know in part." We speak to some Christians, whom we believe to be such, but they do not see many truths of the Gospel. I am sure you need put on your spectacles to discover some Christians. Nay, a telescope or a magnifying glass would be all little enough to distinguish the marks of real Christianity in some professing children of God. Well, after all we may make mistakes, but Jehovah Jesus will make none. All things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.

"*And naked.*" They thought they were clothed and all right. Their defilement was exposed, and they knew it not, but the Lord knew it. How often it is that professing Christians try to rest upon a bed which is shorter than that a man can stretch himself upon it ; and to cover themselves with a covering narrower than that a man can wrap himself in it. (Isa. xxviii. 20). Such a bed must be uncomfortable, and such covering very defective and cold. It will never do to attempt to cover with a covering which is not of God's Spirit. It is only adding sin to sin. Our Lord when upon earth was always tender towards those who felt themselves wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind and naked. He invited the heavy laden to come to Him, and He gave them rest to their souls. He gave excellent counsel to all in need, and so He does now by His Spirit. He is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.

I shall now proceed with our second point. "*The Counsel given.*" "I counsel thee to buy of Me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich ; and white raiment that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear ; and anoint thine eyes with

eye-salve, that thou mayest see." I shall reverse the order in considering this part of the text. I shall notice the "*eye-salve*" first. "Anoint thine eyes with eye-salve, that thou mayest see." These persons had eyes, and probably some little spiritual eyesight. But their spiritual vision was very defective. When our Lord was on earth, He anointed the eyes of a blind man with clay, and sent him to wash in the Pool of Siloam, which is by interpretation, Sent. No sooner had he washed, than he received sight. This pool of Siloam may represent the healing virtue of God's grace in the blood of Christ. The blind man confessed that it was the Son of God Who had opened his eyes. (9th of John). Truly, he had washed in the Pool of Siloam. Now, Christ is the Sent One of God, and whoever is enabled to wash in this heavenly pool, receives spiritual healing and spiritual eyesight. Darkness disappears, and he sees what is the hope of his calling of God in Christ Jesus. Naaman dipped seven times in Jordan and was perfectly cured of his leprosy. A perfect dip into the Jordan of Christ's blood is a perfect cure for sin. It is not our doing some great thing, but the application by the Spirit of a great thing already done.

"*The eye-salve*," I regard as God's Gospel remedy for the restoration of sight to the blind. Blind eyes are opened by the Gospel, and defective vision is improved. This balm of Gilead works wonders on poor sore eyes. "To *anoint*" thine eyes with this eye-salve is to be searching into the Gospel of the grace of God, to see and hear what the Saviour has to say to thee. All true anointing must first come from God. "Ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things." This unction is God's grace, and the effect upon thee is spiritual eyesight. "Ye know all things." This anointing of the Spirit of God precedes our washing in the blood, and anointing our eyes with the eye-salve of the Gospel. But one is a consequence of the other. Now, St. Paul anointed his eyes with Gospel eye-salve, when he said; "I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord:

for whom I have suffered the loss of all things." And St. Peter says: "But grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." By such repeated anointing, the spiritual eyesight of the believer is improved and the extent of his vision enlarged. "That thou mayest see." See what? Thyself lost. Christ thy Saviour. To *see* wonderful things out of God's word. To *see* afar off—heaven and the things which God has prepared for His people. "That thou mayest see" thy security and thy safety in the hands of thy Beloved, thy Redeemer, and thy God.

Let us take up the next part: "and *white raiment*, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear." "*White raiment*." Now, what are we to understand by this "*white raiment*? I am disposed to take it figuratively for spiritual clothing. This raiment we call the Righteousness of God, or of Christ. I know that I have nothing of my own wherewith to clothe myself before God. I need Christ's holy clothing, that "the shame of" my "nakedness do not appear." The figure may refer to the outward walk of a believer's life. "They shall walk with Me in white." What *white*? Verily, we have no *white* of our own. And again, it is said "For they are worthy." We have no worthiness of our own, and yet we are worthy, but it is in Christ. I see in this, union with the Lord Jesus. We shall walk in white, but it will be in the Lord Jesus Christ. He says, "they shall walk with Me in white." "He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before My Father, and before His angels." (Rev. iii. 4 and 5). And again, when we turn to the 7th chapter we read: "And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, what are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?" These are figurative expressions to set forth the perfection, and purity, and holiness of the saints before God in Christ. This is my view of it. Well, the answer comes: "These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes,

and made them white in the Blood of the Lamb." (verses 13 and 14). The latter part of the expression is taken by some as meaning the outward walk of the saints. Be it so, the believer and his works must both be washed. I read again in the 19th chapter, that those who are companions of the Lord Jesus Christ shall "be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of the saints." (verse 8). These are the armies in heaven which follow Jesus upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. (verse 14th). These are they who shall wear the white raiment which shall be put upon them. (3rd. Zech.) The filthy garments of their sins shall have been taken away, and they shall be clothed in the "beautiful garment of salvation which Christ Jesus shall have adorned them withal. The saints shall all appear clothed in beauty and glory.

"Lo! round the throne, at God's right hand,
The saints in countless myriads stand,
Of every tongue redeemed to God,
Array'd in garments washed in blood."

After preaching here some time ago, I was asked, "had I not made a mistake in one of my sermons, in saying, that the saints are as perfect as the Lord Jesus Christ Himself?" I did not think I had, neither do I think so now. Yes, I believe, that all who are in Christ Jesus are as perfect, and holy, and righteous as the Lord Himself. If I made a mistake then, I am making a mistake now. But I do not believe that I have made a mistake on either occasion. If they be not like Christ they will not be fit to sit with Him on His throne in glory. Now, you know that the saints and Christ are one—by eternal union, one. This is a secret little understood even by the professing people of God.

"And that the *shame* of thy nakedness do not appear." We read that the cause of shame and nakedness was sin. (Gen. iii). It has always been so, and it will continue to be so. Sin is a disgusting thing. But how can this shame and this nakedness be got rid of? There is only one way. The Blood of Christ alone can

cleanse thee, and the Righteousness of Christ alone can cover thee.

“Jesus, Thy Blood and Righteousness
My beauty are, my glorious dress ;
Midst flaming worlds, in these array’d,
With joy shall I lift up my head.

“Bold shall I stand in that great day,
For who ought to my charge shall lay ?
While through Thy Blood absolv’d I am,
From sin’s tremendous curse and shame !”

In confirmation of what I have now said, take one or two Scriptures. “They shall not be ashamed that wait for Me.” (Isa. xlix. 23). God has made a promise to His people, saying, “My people shall never be ashamed.” (Joel ii.) Their shame, their sin, and their defilement have been done away in the Blood of the Lamb, and they are now clothed in the white raiment of Jehovah Jesus.

Let us touch upon the next point : “*Gold* tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich.” We shall see by and bye, that this verse wraps itself up entirely into Christ. There are many things in Scripture likened to gold. The words of the Lord are more to be desired than gold. (Psalm xix.) The saints are to be tried like gold. (Zech. xiii. 9. Job. xxiii. 10). The trial of faith is more precious than gold. (1st. Peter i. 7). But it seems to me that the gold in our text is Christ, and Christ only. He is the Head of fine gold. (5th Song 11). He is the man more precious than the golden wedge of Ophir. (Isa. xlii. 12). Gold tried in the fire sets forth the worth and excellency of Christ. There is a beautiful type of Christ in the 25th of Exodus the 11th verse. It is said respecting the Ark : “And thou shalt overlay it with pure gold, within and without shalt thou overlay it, and shalt make upon it a crown of gold round about.” Christ is the pure gold within and without, and He wears the golden crown of glory. Gold is most precious, so is Christ. Gold is most valuable, so is Christ. Gold is most durable, so is Christ. The believer cannot get along without this most excellent gold. He must have it within and without.

Now this tried and pure gold answers all things. It pays the way to heaven and glory. No toll can be exacted which this gold is not able to meet. It settles all disputes, and a person possessing this gold is rich indeed. This gold has been "*tried by fire*." On this account, I look upon it as the best and purest. The Lord Jesus Christ was tried by fire and passed safely through it. He was subjected to the "*fiery trial*" of Satan in the wilderness, and came out of it, like pure gold. He endured the trial of shame and spitting. But the greatest trial through which He passed was when His Father laid sin upon Him, and treated Him as an accursed thing, hiding His countenance from Him. Then it was that Christ felt the bitterness of the curse, and cried out:—"My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" This was Christ as the pure gold being tried in the fiery furnace of God's wrath. He was tried of God and came forth like gold. Now, poor sinner, look at this gold, the Lord Jesus Christ. Is He good enough for thee? If thou hast this gold, thou art rich in grace, rich in wisdom and knowledge, rich in righteousness and good works. If this gold be thine, thou hast all riches and honour. The unsearchable riches of Christ are thine. Now, take up the text, and see if it be not full of Christ. Christ is the Gospel eye-salve to give sight to the blind eyes. Christ is the white raiment of the saints. And Christ is the gold which discharges all debts and enriches all believers. "I counsel thee to buy of Me, gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness may not be manifested, and eye-salve to anoint thine eyes, that thou mayest see."

We come now in the *third place* to consider the *terms* as named in the text—"Buy of Me." Well, what market will you go to? Will you go to the Arminian Market? Or to the Broad Church Market? Or to the Ritualistic Market? Or to the Romanistic Market? Or to the Liberalistic Market? Or to some other "Istic" Market? There is only one Market that I

know of, where this gold can be obtained on the terms of my text. What Market is that, ? you say :— It is the Market of “FREE GRACE.” I shall prove it to you. The whole thing is stated and explained in the 55th of Isaiah and the 1st verse. You know the words :— “Ho, every one that thirsteth,” this is the character. “Come ye to the waters, and he that hath *no money* :” Read again. Is it right ? “He that hath no money.” Why, what can a person do without money ? What can he buy ? Let us see. “Come ye, *buy*, and eat, *yea, come, buy wine and milk without money, and without price.*” Now this is a good and cheap Market to go to. Is it not ? This is the Market of “FREE GRACE,” and you cannot find a better. Well, you say, if a person goes to it what can he get without money ? Why he gets both the wine of the Gospel and the milk of the Gospel. “Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread, and your labour for that which satisfieth not ! Harken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness. Incline your ear, and come unto Me :” What an excellent Counsellor, the Lord Jesus is to His clients. “Hear, and your soul shall live ; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David.” Now, do you see the *terms* ? Are these terms too liberal ? They are the only terms on which the Lord Jesus Christ saves a soul. Let us see how the Lord put matters when He was on earth. Turn to St. Mark’s Gospel, and you will read of a certain person who came to our Lord and said to Him : “Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life ?” (Mark x. 17). Our Lord said :—“Keep the commandments.” And he said : “‘Master, all these have I observed from my youth.’ “Then Jesus beholding him loved him.” I have some hope, but, I may be wrong,—that this person went to heaven after all. But he did not understand spiritual things at this time. And Jesus “said unto him, ‘One thing thou lackest.’” Oh ! it is a difficult thing to part with the last thing, is it not ? The last thing left me :— is all to go ? Yes ! all ! ! Is it not hard ?

"One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow Me." This was to be a dear bargain for him, was it not? But can he do it, think you? "And he was sad at that saying, and went away grieved: for he had great possessions." What became of the man afterwards, we are not told. He may have been Lazarus for aught I know. But who he was I cannot attempt to say. For a person to part with all and everything of his own. Oh how difficult! To be saved only on the *terms* of God's sovereign free grace. How amazing! It is only in the Market of "FREE GRACE," that we can buy without money, that is without anything of our own. And here it is, we buy "Gold" to enrich, "white raiment" to clothe, and "eye-salve" to heal. May God grant us grace to submit to His *own terms*.

The concluding part of the Epistle runs thus: As many as I love I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore and repent." The loved ones of God are rebuked and chastened by Himself. The unloved ones are neither rebuked nor chastened of Him. You know what is said of His own dear sons in the 12th of Hebrews. "My son, despise not the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when corrected of Him: for whom the Lord loves, He chastens, and scourges every son whom He receives. If you endure chastening, God is dealing with you as with sons. For what son is he whom the Father chastens not?" This chastisement is an accompaniment of Salvation. "Be zealous therefore and repent." True zeal and true repentance go together. It is possible to have a zeal of religion which is not according to spiritual knowledge. Where there is spiritual knowledge, there will be zeal in religion, accompanied with humility, repentance, and Godly sorrow. May our zeal and our repentance be the fruits of the Holy Spirit of God!

Now for the 20th verse. It is introduced with a note of admiration. "*Behold*!" Jesus "stands at the door" of the heart and "knocks." His *standing* denotes his

willingness and readiness to serve His saints. Take the case of Stephen when he was being stoned to death. He saw heaven opened, and the glory of God, and Jesus *standing* ready to receive his spirit. (Acts 7th). A full view of Jesus enables us to pray for our enemies. "Lay not this sin to their charge." Jesus stands at the door and knocks. Some say that he knocks by conscience, by judgments, and by death. But this is not the way He enters the heart. The key to a right understanding of this verse, is in the 5th of the Song. Jesus, the Beloved, "puts in His hand by the hole of the door," and unbolts it for Himself, and then enters in and possesses the heart. The voice of the Beloved is a powerful voice. The dead hear His voice and live. "If any man hear my voice, and open the door." This is a supposition. Persons do sometimes open the door of their hearts or minds. Neighbours do so to each other occasionally. They open their minds, it may be in a friendly way or otherwise. Job opened his heart to the Lord when he said: "Behold, I am vile." "I repent and abhor myself in dust and ashes." So did David: "I acknowledge my transgression unto Thee . . . and Thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin." So did Isaiah when he said: "Woe is me." And Jeremiah: "Behold, I cannot speak: for I am a child." And the Publican: "God be merciful to me a sinner." And St. Paul: "Lord what wilt Thou have me to do?" Now this was opening the heart to the Lord.

A word on the *Promise*: "I will come into him, and will sup with him, and he with Me." This is spiritual union and communion. This is feasting with the Lord. "Eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved." Christ and His saints are merry together at this love feast. And those who feast with Him now, shall shortly sit with Him on His throne. "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me in My throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with My Father in His throne." Have we the hearing ear, if so, then "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches." Amen! and Amen!!

Dr. HAWKER on Rev. iii.—18.

“By gold tried in the fire, can mean no other than Christ Himself. He hath been tried, indeed, in the fire of every exercise, when, for His people, He bore the sins and sorrow of His redeemed, in His own body on the tree. As the church’s Surety, He stood exposed to the fire of God’s wrath, as a burnt-offering; and all the fiery darts of Satan, which in the days of His temptation, He endured. And, by white raiment, we may well conceive, the Lord means that spotless robe of righteousness, which on the Cross He wrought out, for the clothing of His people. And by the eye-salve to anoint the eyes of the spiritually blind, can mean no other than the unction of the Holy Ghost, by which in regenerating grace, in the new birth, and in divine teaching, the church is brought to know all things. And it is not the smallest beauty of the scripture, in the counsel of Christ, that what Jesus calls to buy of Him, means without money, and without price. It is all a free gift, free grace, free love. And He that counsels His people thus to buy, gives them the disposition how to buy; namely, coming to Him to receive, not to give. The precious things Jesus sells, are too precious for purchase. If a man would give all the substance of his house for this love of God in Christ, it would utterly be contemned. Moreover, these incalculably great blessings have all been purchased before by Jesus Himself, and with no less a price than that of His own blood. So that, as He bought them for His people, so He counsels them to come and buy of Him, in this unusual way of buying; not only without money, but without anything: neither credit, nor promise, nor deserving. Was there ever heard of such a free-grace market as this? Reader, shall you and I take the counsel of this wonderful Counsellor? Shall we seek Him as our true riches? (Shall we) accept this white raiment for our only covering before God? . . . And shall we bless Him for the unction of His Holy Spirit, in anointing our eyes, to behold thereby our nothingness and His all-sufficiency”?

SERIES VI. No. 4.

“ THE LEAVEN WHICH A WOMAN TOOK.”

A S E R M O N

PREACHED BY THE

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LAMBETH, LONDON,

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*In the 13th chapter of the Gospel according to St. Matthew
and at the 33rd verse, you will read :—*

“ ANOTHER PARABLE SPAKE HE UNTO THEM ; THE KING-
DOM OF HEAVEN IS LIKE UNTO LEAVEN, WHICH A WOMAN
TOOK, AND HID IN THREE MEASURES OF MEAL, TILL THE
WHOLE WAS LEAVENED.”

The chapter in which our text occurs contains eight parables. Four of them were addressed by our Lord to the multitude, as He sat in a ship, and they stood on the shore—(verses 1, 2). The four parables are the parable of the sower and the seed ; the parable of the tares ; the parable of the mustard seed ; and the parable of the leaven. Our Lord's disciples asked Him why He spake unto the multitude in parables ? His answer was clear and definite :—“ Because it is given unto *you* to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to *them* it is not given.” I would ask you to read at your leisure from the 10th to the 18th verse of this chapter, and

then you will see for yourselves the *wonderful difference* which our Lord made between His own disciples and the multitude which He addressed. After the four parables already named, it is said :—" All these things spake Jesus unto the *multitude* in parables, and without a parable spake He not unto them : That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, I will open my mouth in parables ; I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world." In the parables of our Lord, things, deep things, which had been kept secret since the world began, were made manifest by the teaching and preaching of Jesus Christ. Then Jesus sent the multitude away, and He went into the house : and His disciples came to Him, saying, " Declare unto us the parable of the tares of the field." He did so, and a most beautiful exposition it is. Read it, and study it. He then delivered to them, privately in the house, the parables of the hidden treasure, of the pearl, and of the dragnet cast into the sea, and of the householder. Now all these parables are evidently intended to convey valuable instruction to the disciples respecting " the kingdom of heaven."

Before proceeding with an exposition of our text, it may not be out of place to remark, that a parable has been defined as a *similitude* or *comparison* of one thing with another for the purpose of setting forth some important truth or doctrine. This definition will suit me very well, although, a parable may be described as a proverb, or wise saying, full of instruction. Indeed, I have read somewhere, that a parable is an " earthly story with a heavenly meaning." This definition of a parable, I presume, has been chosen for the sake of simplicity. In speaking of the interpretation of parables generally, I do not think, that it is necessary to the understanding of the main drift of a parable, to force every part of it, as setting forth expressly and minutely some important truth or doctrine. But, if every part of a parable will bear pressing into the service of truth, and the truth elicited, be not contrary to the clear and distinctive teaching of God's Word, then, I see no harm in drawing

out of a parable all the instruction you can possibly obtain. Our Lord's exposition of the parable of the tares of the field to His disciple, may serve us as a model of interpretation. If I should take a different view of the parable, which we are now about to consider, from some eminent divines, I hope my view will receive some support, at least, from the Scriptures, from history, and from experience. I will not delay you any longer, but proceed to open up the text.

Let us consider first what is meant by "the kingdom of heaven"; and secondly, the comparison itself, "The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till the whole was leavened."

Let us consider first what is meant by "the kingdom of heaven." The expression, "kingdom of heaven," is peculiar to St. Matthew, and occurs from 20 to 30 times in his Gospel. St. Mark and St. Luke use the expression, "kingdom of God," to convey the same idea. I do not think, that we are to understand the Evangelists as meaning the kingdom of glory in heaven, or the kingdom of grace, as set up in the hearts of believers by the Holy Ghost; but rather the kingdom of the Messiah, during the Gospel Dispensation. In the 3rd of St. Matthew, we read: "In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, and saying, Repent ye; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." From what follows in the second verse, it is clear, that the Baptist had an eye to the Messiah, and the setting up of His kingdom. After our Lord's baptism, and His conflict with Satan in the wilderness, He preached the same truth as the Baptist, saying, "Repent; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." (Mat. iv. 17.) St. Mark says, "Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the Gospel of the kingdom of God". (i.) "The kingdom of God" and "the kingdom of heaven" are expressions for the kingdom of the Messiah, as it will be made manifest from time to time, until Jehovah Jesus comes again in power and great glory. But "the kingdom of heaven," or "the kingdom of the Messiah," includes the professing Christian Church under the Gospel Dispensation. And it is

the *state* of this professing Christian Church, which is described and illustrated by the parables of our Lord. The parables give us different phases of this varying professing Christian Church *state* here in earth.

The expression, "the kingdom of heaven," stands in contrast with all earthly kingdoms. "The kingdom of heaven" in its *unmixed* state has Christ for its King, Whom the Father has set upon His holy hill of Zion. (Psalm ii. 6). The Messiah has a kingdom which is not of this world, over which He does and will rule and reign for ever, as the Prince of peace. He governs it by His Word and Spirit. I know of no other means. He sends forth the rod of His strength out of Zion, which rod, is the Word of His Gospel. He rules in the midst of His enemies, and His people are a willing people in the day of His power. (Psalm cx.) He sends forth the Holy Ghost into the hearts of His Redeemed, and establishes His kingdom of righteousness, and peace, and love and joy in them to the praise of His grace. The *unmixed* state of the Church is a kingdom within a kingdom. It is a kingdom which is not of this world. Few indeed, are the parables of our Lord, which give us this aspect of "the kingdom of heaven." There are, perhaps, two parables in this chapter, which may be taken as favouring this *unmixed* aspect of "the kingdom of heaven." I mean the parable of the *treasure* hidden in the field, and the parable of the *merchantman* seeking goodly pearls. I shall say a few words upon each of these parables. "The kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in the field; which when a man found he hid, and for his joy goes and sells all that he has and buys that field"? Now what is "*the treasure*"? My answer is from the 3rd of Malachi, the 17th verse: "And they shall be Mine. saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up *My jewels*." Read the margin, and you will find the "jewels" to be "the special and peculiar treasure" of God—or God's special property. Now where was this "treasure"? It was "hid in the field." We are told that the field is the world, dispensation, or age (verses 38 and 40). The "treasure"

sure" was first hid in Christ, the Covenant Head of the Church. By the fall, it was hid in the world. It was found again by a man. But Who is the "Man"? Well, it is God's right hand Man—the Man Christ Jesus. He found the "treasure" in the field and hid it as His own special property. And for His joy of having this "treasure" for ever, "He goes and sells all that He has and buys the field." Surely, "you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich." Now for the parable of the Merchantman seeking goodly pearls. "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchantman seeking goodly pearls, and when he found one pearl of great price, he went away, sold all that he had and bought it." Who is the Merchantman? It is not the penniless sinner, but Christ Who possesses "unsearchable riches," and hence, He is well able to purchase the priceless pearl. But what are the "goodly pearls"? These are the Lord's "hidden ones" in the sea of this world, which have to be fished up from time to time by the Lord's fishermen. A pearl is a white, shining, beautiful, and valuable thing, and so is a saint of God. Every child of God is a goodly pearl. There is, however, "one pearl of great price." And what is this? It is the *whole Church* of God as one body, for which Christ has shed His most precious blood. Christ is the Merchantman Who seeks and finds. This idea often occurs in the Scriptures. For the one pearl of great price, the Merchantman sells all that He has. This is Christ laying aside His glory, or "emptying Himself by taking upon Him the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men, and being formed in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, having become obedient even unto death, and that the death of the cross" (Phil. ii. 6-8). He parts with all but He buys the priceless pearl. "He bought it." "He purchased the church of God with His own blood." "Ye are bought with a price." The church is redeemed not with corruptible things, as gold and silver, but with the precious blood of Christ, the

spotless Lamb of God. These two parables may be taken as describing the kingdom of heaven in an *unmixed* state. But to proceed—

I am of opinion that *many* of the parables describe the *mixed* state of Christ's *professing Church* and *kingdom*. In the parable of the sower, we have four classes of hearers. The wayside hearer, the stony hearer, the thorny hearer, and the good ground hearer. It appears from this parable, as if only one out of four of those who hear the Gospel, has any real spiritual interest in Christ. In the parable of the tares of the field, you have the spiritual children of the kingdom, and the children of the wicked one. This is a *mixed* state. The time will come when there shall be a separation, for God's messengers shall gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity. Meanwhile, both wheat and tares have to grow together until the harvest. The parable of the drawnet gives us a view of things at the end of this dispensation. The net gathers of every kind, good and bad, and when the shore is reached, the good are gathered into vessels, but the bad are cast away. The parable of the ten virgins brings before us the *mixed* state of the professing Christian Church when the Bridegroom cometh for His Bride. (Mat. xxv.) Some of the parables seem to point at those who are the professed Preachers of the Gospel. I now refer more especially to the parable of the Labourers in the vineyard; and to the parable of the talents. (See Mat. xx. and xxiv.) The parable of the householder is most instructive upon this point. "Therefore every scribe which is instructed into the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man, that is a householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old." (Mat. xiii. 52). It is very evident to my own mind, whatever it may be to the minds of others, that every one of our Lord's parables, was intended to set forth to those who had ears to hear, and eyes to see, and hearts to understand, some important truth or doctrine. "A wise man will hear, and increase learning; and a man of understanding shall attain unto wise

counsels ; to understand a proverb, and the interpretation ; the words of the wise and their dark sayings." (Proverbs i.) I hope, you will bear in mind one fact, that many of our Lord's parables, were not only instructive similitudes, but *prophetical* illustrations of the *mixed* state of the professing Christian Church, during the present Dispensation.

I shall now take up our second point. The comparison itself: "The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened." In this comparison you have (1) "*the leaven*"; (2) the agent, "*a woman*"; (3) her action, "*she took and hid it*"; (4) the material in which she concealed it "*in three measures of meal*"; and (5) the effect, "*till the whole was leavened.*"

The generally received interpretation of this parable is, that it refers to and illustrates the secret working and spreading of the Gospel in the hearts of those who hear it, until they are brought entirely under its blessed influence. To enlarge upon this view for a moment, I shall give you the substance of an Eminent Writer upon the parables, who takes the leaven in a good sense as referring to the Gospel and to its triumphant and glorious results. He speaks of the kingdom of heaven, as the Gospel Dispensation ; of the leaven as the Word of God or Gospel ; of the woman, as Christ ; of the meal as persons ; and of the whole lump as the entire body of the elect. He says, leaven is of a *diffusive quality*, so is the Gospel. Leaven diffuseth itself *gradually*, so does the Gospel. That leaven is of a *softening, assimilating, quickening*, and *powerful nature*, so is the Gospel. That leaven works *secretly* and *invisibly* in the meal, so does the Gospel in the hearts of the Redeemed. (B. Keach, 1701). This is a very short summary of the views of Mr. Keach, who takes the "leaven" in a good and Gospel sense.

I believe it is admitted on all hands, that "*leaven*" in the Scriptures, is generally, if not invariably used in a bad sense, and if so, why make the text an exception ? I think, it will be difficult to prove, that Christ is ever

spoken of as a "*woman*" in the Word of God. I am aware that some Interpreters speak of the "*woman*" as the Ministry. Other objections might be raised to the above interpretation, for whatever may be fairly said of "*leaven*" when viewed as the Gospel in its operations, may also be said of it when viewed as "the mystery of iniquity" in its workings in the professing Christian Church, or "kingdom of heaven." If I should differ from the exposition which I have just named, I hope to be able to give you reasons for doing so. You are not bound by my views, if they be not supported by the Word of God. I pray the Holy Ghost to kill, revive, and quicken some poor sinner this evening. This is the sovereign work of the Spirit. And I am one of those who believe in the sovereignty of God. But to proceed :—

What are we to understand by "*leaven*" ? What do the Scriptures say about it ? "*Leaven*" itself is of a *fermenting* and *corrupting* nature. The LORD prohibited the use of leaven during the Feast of Passover. These are His words :—"Seven days shall ye eat unleavened bread ; even the first day ye shall put away leaven out of your houses : for whosoever eateth leavened bread from the first day until the seventh day, that soul shall be cut off from Israel." Here is the punishment, if any one presumed to do what God had forbidden. The person should be cut off from Israel, and he should not be reckoned as an Israelite. This cutting off may mean more than excommunication. It may have been cutting off by death. Again, we read, "In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month at even, ye shall eat unleavened bread, until the one and twentieth day of the month at even. Seven days shall there be no leaven found in your houses : for whosoever eateth that which is leavened, even that soul shall be cut off from the congregation of Israel, whether he be a stranger or born in the land. Ye shall eat nothing leavened ; in all your habitations shall ye eat unleavened bread." (Ex. xii. 15, 18-20). "*Leaven*" was not to be offered in the sacrifices. "Thou shalt not offer the blood of my

sacrifice with leavened bread." (Ex. xxiii. 18). This verse refers to the blood of the Paschal Lamb. And again, "No meat offering, which ye shall bring unto the Lord, shall be made with leaven: for ye shall burn no leaven, nor any honey, in any offering of the Lord made by fire." (Lev. ii. 11). You have now heard what is said about "leaven" in the Old Testament. Let us now hear what is said about it by our Lord in the New Testament. In the 16th of St. Matthew you read:—"Then Jesus said unto them (His disciples) Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees." The disciples did not understand what our Lord meant at the first. They thought that He spoke to them about "the leaven of bread," but afterwards they were enlightened and then they understood Him and His meaning too. "Then understood they how that He bade them not beware of the leaven of bread, but of the *doctrine* of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees." (verses 6, 12). St Luke says, that this "leaven" of the Pharisees was "Hypocrisy" (xii. 1). Hypocrisy was the leaven which corrupted all their principles and practices. The Pharisees were a proud and ostentatious sect among the Jews. They loved to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they might be seen of men. They fasted often, they made broad their phylacteries, they paid tithes of all they possessed, and they transgressed the commandment of God by their tradition. They were hypocrites. The Sadducees were a sect who denied the resurrection, and said, there is neither angel nor spirit. (Acts xxiii. 8). Well might our Lord caution His disciples against the "leaven" of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees. Let us now hear what St. Paul says about "leaven." See 1 Cor. v. 6, 7, and 8th verses. "Know ye not that a little leaven." This little leaven was fornication, as we gather from the preceding verses. "A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump. Purge out, therefore, the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us: Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old

leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth." I think it must be clear to you from the Scriptures, which I have given you, that "leaven" is generally used in a bad sense. And if this be its general use in the Scriptures, why should we make an exception of our text? I see no real necessity for doing so. I shall therefore take it, as illustrating the working of "the mystery of iniquity," in the professing Christian Church. (2 Thess. ii. 7). St. Paul prophesied of the evils which would arise in the professing Christian Church, and we can now say, they have arisen and are being fulfilled at this very day. The prophecy to which I refer, is in 1 Timothy iv. 1-3. "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly. that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils: speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth." Here you have the "leaven" of apostasy working its way in the professing Christian Church during the Gospel Dispensation. This "leaven" wrought in the Church in Pergamos: Jesus said, "But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication." False doctrine leads to idolatry and uncleanness of living. This was also the "leaven" of the Nicolaitanes which our Lord condemned. (Rev. ii. 14, 15). We take "leaven" then as used in a bad sense.

We shall now speak of the agent—"a woman." Who is this *woman*? When we hear of any thing very good or very bad, a woman is generally the first in it. Now I cannot see that the "woman" in my text refers to Christ. There is not sufficient scriptural warranty for speaking of Christ as a "woman." Christ is the Husband of the Church. St. Paul says, "I have espoused you to one Husband, that I may present you as a chaste

virgin to Christ." (2 Cor. xi. 2 ; Rom. vii. 4). If Christ be the Husband, He is not the woman. Now, we read of a "woman" in the 12th of Revelation, who was clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars. The "woman" in this chapter is the Church of God in her purity and beauty, and yet persecuted. Her clothing is the Sun of Righteousness; the moon of Jewish ceremonialism is under her feet; and the doctrines of the Apostles, like twelve stars, adorn her crown. This "woman" was fruitful and brought forth a favoured offspring. But the great dragon, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan stood ready to devour, if possible, every child that was born of her. The children and the woman are taken care of by God Himself; still she is persecuted, and has to fly into the wilderness, a place is prepared of God for her, where she shall be fed with heavenly food. Satan can persecute, but he can neither destroy this "woman," nor her offspring: "And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he *persecuted* the woman which brought the man child. And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent. And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood." This flood of persecution failed to destroy the woman. "And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth. And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus." This is a description of the Church of God in her pure and persecuted days. Persecution makes a wonderful separation between the precious and the vile. The wilderness is the place for the true and spiritual woman. "Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness, leaning upon her Beloved?" This is the Bride, the Church of God, leaning, resting,

and depending upon Christ her Beloved and adorable Husband. This is not the "woman" to put "leaven" into the three measures of meal. Not she indeed. She requires good and wholesome food for her support. But is there a "woman" capable of corrupting the meal? I think so.

I shall now show you an *Apostate Woman* as she is described in the 17th of Revelation. She is the "Strange Woman" spoken of by Solomon. I shall read a few verses without any comment. "So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a *woman* sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. And the *woman* was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication: And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration." (Verses 3 to 7). Now we are told who this woman was in the 18th verse. "And the woman which thou sawest is that great city which reigneth over the kings of the earth." I have no doubt in my own mind as to the application of the whole of this passage to the Apostate Church of Rome. In her conduct for more than a thousand years, she has answered the description which is here given of her. Solomon gives counsel to his son to avoid the "*Strange Woman*." He describes her by her attire and craftiness; by her impudence and daring; and by her diligence and allurements. The wanton one yields to her fair speeches and flatteries, he goes after her like an ox to the slaughter, or like a fool to the stocks. This is the "*strange woman*," the Apostate Church which takes and hides the leaven in the three measures of meal, till the whole be leavened. Well might Solomon, as a Prophet, advise the children of wisdom; "Hearken unto me now

therefore, O ye children, and attend unto the words of my mouth. Let not thine heart decline to her ways, go not astray in her paths. For she hath cast down many wounded : yea, many strong men have been slain by her. Her house is the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death." (7th Proverbs). This is indeed, the "strange woman," the "apostate woman," "the harlot of the Revelation." This "woman" will take the leaven and hide it in the three measures of meal till the whole be leavened.

We shall now say a few words upon the *action of the woman*. She took the "leaven" and "hid" it. One thing I do feel certain of, and it is this, that she never took this "leaven" or received it from Christ. The "leaven" of Arianism, which robs Christ of His Divinity; the "leaven" of Pelagianism which denies the depravity of man; the "leaven" of Auricular Confession to a Priest; the "leaven" of Transubstantiation and the Sacrifice of the Mass; the "leaven" of Purgatory and Prayers for the dead; the "leaven" of Maryolatry and Popish Infallibility, together with many other corrupting and depraving doctrines, were never taken from the Word of God, but from him who is the father of lies, and the promoter of every abomination. The "Apostate woman" is a tool in the hands of the Wicked One to corrupt and deprave the Gospel of Christ. She took the "leaven" and hid it in three pecks of meal.

What are we to understand by "*the three measures of meal*"? I look upon it as a figurative expression, and if I be right in this, then we are to search and see what spiritual truth it is intended to convey. When the three men stood before Abraham in the plains of Mamre, he said to Sarah his wife: "Make ready quickly three measures of fine meal, knead it, and make cakes upon the hearth." (Gen. xviii. 6). This must be taken literally and not figuratively. The fine meal was made into cakes, fit for food, which was to supply the needs of the three men. Again, I read of a "barrel of meal which wasted not." (1 Kings xvii. 14, 15). Although this meal was for daily food, yet it was miraculously

supplied. A beautiful figure of the Gospel which is the pure meal from heaven. You will remember the pot of pottage set before the sons of the Prophets, when they cried out to Elisha, "there is death in the pot." The Prophet cast some meal into the pot, and then, there was no harm in the pot. There is death in every pot, in which, there is no Gospel. The Gospel is the meal. (2 Kings iv. 38-41). The word for meal in my text means "*ground flour*." A very fit emblem of the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which has been so admirably prepared for the sustenance of the saints. Now, if we take this "ground flour" as setting forth the Gospel, then, we shall regard the "*three measures*" or pecks, as the *quantity* which each Person in the Trinity has contributed to the Gospel. The Gospel is the outcome of the everlasting and sovereign love of God the Father. The Gospel has for its centre, the Atonement and blood-shedding of Jesus Christ. The Gospel is revealed and effectually applied to the sinner's soul by the Holy Ghost. Has not the "apostate woman" concealed "leaven" in each measure of this "ground flour"? Has she not done all she could to discountenance the sovereignty of the Father's election of His people in Christ Jesus before the world began? Has she not, and does she not now seek to glorify fallen man as sovereign in his salvation? And does she not try to hide "leaven" in the Atonement of Christ, when she speaks of Christ's death as only making salvation possible? And does she not put "leaven" into the Spirit's measure when she speaks of "baptismal regeneration," of "man's free will," and "carnal powers?" You may know the "woman" by what you hear preached from the pulpits. "The strange woman" will be impudent, daring, and damning, if persons do not fall down and worship at her shrine. But the "poor, persecuted Woman," will desire to know her loving Father, that she has victory over every foe through the "blood of the Lamb," and that she is under the teaching, guiding, and glorifying influences of the Spirit of God. The children of the most High know the taste of the "ground flour." They have

fed upon Christ in the Gospel, as the "Bread of heaven." They have eaten angel's food, for Jehovah has sent them meat in abundance. Lord evermore give us this bread, which is made of pure "ground flour" and of the "finest of the wheat."

Now, for the *effect*, "*till the whole was leavened.*" Here is *assimilation*. The "leaven" in due time shews itself in its *corrupting* effects. If you take any part of the "leaven" of which I have spoken, it was small and apparently insignificant at the first. But now look abroad at all the professing Christian Churches. The Church of Rome was once a Church of saints and beloved of God. But what is she now? If she looks beautiful without—What is she within? The Mystery of iniquity is inscribed upon her forehead. Her anathemas and curses—Her sales of indulgences and 'pardons—Her pride and arrogancy—Her idolatrous worship of images and saints—Her sacramental confessional and crimes—Her forgeries and falsehoods proclaim her, as "the woman with the golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornications." She is "full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness." And what can we say for the Church of England? With her Ritualism! With her Priestcraft! With her Ecclesiastical mummeries! With her Processional exhibitions! With her Latitudinarianism! And with her hosts of Indifferents! There was a time, when she contended for the faith once delivered to the saints, and counted not her life dear to herself, that the Gospel of the grace of God might be preserved in our midst. But now, I fear, she is fast becoming "the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird." If you look again at the Christian Sects as they are called. Do you find anything better in them? Alas! Alas! In one sect, reason is deified. In another, the Godhead of Christ is denied. In a third, there is no Holy Ghost. In a fourth, the Inspiration of God's Word is ignored. And in most, if not in all of them, there is a proud pursued Diotrephes, who loveth to have the pre-eminence. The

words of my text are verily fulfilled in the professing Christian Church of the present day : " The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened." If the explanation of the text, which I have just given you be Scriptural and true—then, is it not a time for testing and trying professing Christian Churches by the Word of the Lord ? What saith the Scriptures ?

In conclusion, allow me to say to you, that the true Minister of the Gospel has but one course to pursue : " He is the angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting Gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, saying, fear God and give glory to Him." (Rev. xiv. 6). How can a Minister preach the Gospel faithfully, if he keeps back any part of the counsel of God. St. Paul could challenge the Ephesians : " I am pure from the blood of all men ; for I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God." If you want to know what sort of a Gospel he preached to the Ephesians, read his Epistle to them. Woe is unto me, if I preach not the glorious Gospel of the blessed God. Woe is unto me, if I preach not the Father in His sovereign and Electing love. Woe is unto me, if I preach not Christ and Him crucified. Woe is unto me, if I preach not the Holy Ghost in His quickening and saving power. We never need fear the consequences. All will be well ! We have God's Word of Promise for it : " For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater : So shall My word be that goeth forth out of My mouth : it shall not return unto Me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it."

Hallelujah ! Praise ye the Lord !!

“THE CROSS OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST.”

A SERMON

PREACHED BY THE

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AT VERULAM MISSION CHURCH, KENNINGTON ROAD,
LAMBETH, LONDON,

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*In the 6th Chapter of St. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians
and at the 14th verse, you will read :—*

“BUT GOD FORBID THAT I SHOULD GLORY, SAVE IN
THE CROSS OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST BY WHOM
THE WORLD IS CRUCIFIED UNTO ME AND I UNTO THE
WORLD.”

In the 11th verse, the Apostle informs the Galatians, that he had written this Epistle to them with his own hand. “Ye see how large a letter I have written unto you with mine own hand.” Several of his other Epistles were written by his companions in the faith, but subscribed by himself. “The salutation of Paul with mine own hand, which is the token in every Epistle : so I write.” (2nd Thess. iii. 17). In the 12th verse, the Apostle speaks of, and exposes false teachers, or “false brethren,” who had crept into the Church unawares. They were Judaizers, who desired to add to the Christian religion, the Mosaic Ritual. They were a fair type of the Ritualists of the present day. The Judaizing teachers would be proud of their descent from Abraham, of their ecclesiastical privileges according to the law, and doubtless of their learning and eloquence. Still, they were men pleasers, and preferred the “fair shew in the flesh,” to “suffering persecution for the

cross of Christ." "As many as desire to make a fair shew in the flesh, they constrain you to be circumcised." And why? "Only lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ." The Apostle then charges home upon these "false teachers" inconsistency—"For neither they themselves who are circumcised keep the law; but desire to have you circumcised, that they may glory in your flesh." That they may glory among the Jews in having been the means of so many professing Christians being circumcised. This was worldly and carnal glorying. How different from the Apostle's glorying as stated in our text. "But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me and I unto the world." Here is true glorying, "According as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature. The distinctive mark of a real Christian is a new creature in Christ Jesus.

I shall now proceed with the text :—First, the Cross ; secondly, the crucifixion ; and thirdly, the glorying. I hope I shall be able to communicate to you under these three divisions, the thoughts which are in my own mind. Some Ministers do not like divisions, I only wish they did, for I am sure, it would be much more profitable to their Congregations. I mean it would be much more profitable to their Congregations, if the Preachers had got anything to say, which was worthy of being heard. I like divisions myself, for I find them a very great help to me in speaking, and I am certain they are equally a help to those who hear me. It is a very great fault in young Ministers of the present day, to begin their Sermons without a beginning, and to ramble and rove along without a plan, and to end without an ending. But conceited youth is slow to learn, and very unready to take a hint. This is a great defect in the rising generation of youthful and inexperienced preachers. I suppose we must not expect to find old heads on young shoulders. If there be any young min-

isters here to night, or any who intend practising preaching, let me advise them to prepare and divide their subjects well, before they venture to trouble other persons with their orations from the pulpit. Let them prepare most carefully always, and let them not attempt to deceive both themselves, their congregations and their God, by saying, "they trust in the Lord to give them a word." This sort of speech, is either an apology for a very poor Sermon, or a prelude to a carnal outburst of grandiloquence. Congregations, after all, are not easily deceived. Let me say, that if young Ministers have prepared their subjects well, and the Lord takes them away from them, He will then give them better subjects, and reveal Himself to them as Sovereign Lord of all their thoughts, words, and works.

Let us now consider, first, what is implied in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. The word cross is used in the following senses in the Scriptures:—(1) for the literal cross on which our Lord was crucified; (2) for the whole work of Christ in His sufferings and death; and (3) for the sufferings and afflictions of the people of God. I shall now endeavour to establish these statements by the Word of God.

First, for the *literal cross* on which our Lord was crucified. The *literal* meaning of the word for cross is "*stake*." It was used as an instrument of cruel punishment, and was either driven through the criminal, or the criminal was bound to it, until death put an end to his awful sufferings. In early times, crosses were made of the rudest and readiest materials, because of the number of victims to be crucified. Trees were often used as crosses. Josephus says, when writing of the siege of Jerusalem by Titus;—"The soldiers, out of wrath and hatred they bore the Jews, nailed those they caught, one after one way, and another after another, to the crosses by way of jest; when their multitude was so great, that room was wanting for the crosses, and crosses wanting for the bodies." (Wars of the Jews, Book V. chap. xi. sec. 1). The Jews had cried out to Pilate before concerning Jesus Christ, say-

ing, "Let Him be crucified." Pilate declared that he "was innocent of the blood of this just person." The Jews said, "His blood be on us and on our children," and it was so. They had crucified Christ, and now they are crucified in return. Now, we read respecting the *literal cross* of Christ, that "a man of Cyrene, Simon by name: him the Jews compelled to bear His cross." When Christ was on the cross, some of the Jews deridingly said; "If Thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross." And others said:—"If He be the King of Israel, let Him now come down from the cross, and we will believe Him." Here you have the *literal cross* on which Christ was crucified. If you wish to see more about this *literal cross* as described in the Word of God, I shall refer you to the following Scriptures. "Mat. xxvii. 32, 40, 42. Mark xv. 21, 30, 32. Luke xxiii, 26. John xix. 17, 19, 25, 32).

The *Shape* of the cross on which our Lord was crucified is of very little importance indeed. The earliest crosses used as instruments of punishment, were only rude *stakes* or *trees*. Crosses may have been of different shapes, and doubtless were so. Some may have been like the letter T, or the letter X, or of the following shape †. There seems, however, to be very little resemblance between the *literal cross* on which our Lord died, and those ivory and golden crosses worn by ladies and gentlemen in our own day. Persons may adorn themselves with such frivolous things, if they like; but I hope, they do not wish to impose upon us, that because they bear a cross upon their bosom, they have Christ in their hearts. It would be the height of presumption and arrogance for any one to dictate about the shape of the cross on which the "Prince of Glory died."

There is a story related in Ecclesiastical History of the 4th century of Helena the mother of Constantine, who was induced, when nearly eighty years of age, to visit Mount Calvary, and being shewn the spot, where tradition said, our Lord was buried, she had the place excavated. It is said three crosses were discovered.

But how was the true cross of Christ to be known? The following plan was hit upon. Sick persons were touched by each cross separately. It is said, that one of the three crosses only produced the miraculous cures. This cross, as a matter of course, was declared to be the true cross of Christ. The principal part of this cross was afterwards deposited in a Church built on the very spot on Mount Calvary. Another part of the cross was sent to Constantinople, and the third part was sent to Rome. I need hardly say, that imposture was practised upon the credulous and superstitious. Pieces of the so called original cross was sold to willing buyers, and by this means the wealth of the Church was increased. It was also given out, that although pieces of the cross were sold, yet it remained perfect, complete, and entire as at the first, the cross possessing the power of *self multiplication*. You may receive or reject as much of this story as you like. I think you know how to estimate a story of this sort. Pious frauds have often been resorted to when the end has been considered sufficient to justify the means. There is also a story related of Constantine, who is said to have seen at mid-day the *sign* of the cross in the heavens, with this inscription upon it, "BY THIS CONQUER." Whether Constantine dreamt that he saw the sign of the cross in the heavens, or whether he imposed upon the people for his own aggrandizement, is a point which is open to disputation. One good thing Constantine did accomplish in his reign, he banished the cross as an instrument of punishment and death. There is one fact, which we must never forget, and it is this, that the cross became to many professing christianity in these early days, a superstitious object of veneration. Subsequently to the time of Constantine, it was decreed as an object of religious worship. I refer to the eighth and following centuries. And it has continued to be an idolatrous object of worship in the Church of Rome even to this day. And there are others also, who seem to glory more in the material than in the spiritual cross of our Lord and Saviour

Jesus Christ. May it please God to keep you and me from superstition, and idolatry of every description.

The cross is used for the whole work of Christ in His sufferings and death. The account which we have of Christ's sufferings both before and when He was nailed to the cross, is very painful. Pilate scourged Him, and the soldiers stripped Him, and put on Him a scarlet robe. They crowned Him with a crown of thorns, and then mocked Him. They spit on Him, and smote Him, and then led Him away to crucify Him. Those who passed by wagged their heads at Him. The chief Priests together with the Scribes and Elders mocked Him. And the two thieves which were crucified with Him, cast the same in His teeth. (Mat. xxvii). St. Paul speaks thus of the Son of God:—"He was found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." (Phil. ii. 8). This was an ignominious and shameful death. He took the place of the lost and ruined sinner. With joy and delight He did so:—"Who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." (Heb. xii. 2). Christ on the cross was "*made a curse*" for the Redemption of His people. They were all cursed by the law for disobedience. He takes their place on the tree and bears the curse for them in its full penalty—Hence, "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." (Gal. iii. 13). This refers to Deuteronomy, He that is hanged on a tree is accursed of God. (xxi. 22, 23). When Christ was thus cursed of God, He cried out: "*My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?*" It was on the tree, Christ magnified the law and made it honourable. Christ has filled up the chasm made by sin between God and the sinner:—Hence:—

"The terrors of law, and of God,
With me can have nothing to do;
My Saviour's obedience and blood
Hide all my transgressions from view."

But Christ on the cross was "*made sin*," and dealt with as sin—He was cast out. "For He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin." And why was He made sin for us? "That we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." (2 Cor. v. 21). Christ takes the sinner's place and satisfies divine justice for him. The sinner then stands in Christ before God, perfect in Righteousness. St Peter speaks thus of Christ's work on the tree:—"Who His own-self bare our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed." (1 Peter ii. 24). The sufferings of Christ when He was made a curse for us, and when He was made sin for us, are that full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction, once offered upon the cross for our eternal Redemption. When Jesus was bruised on the cross, the pleasure of the Lord was seen to prosper in His hand. Jehovah Father saw of the travail of the Saviour's soul and was satisfied. Jesus bore the iniquities of the many, and they are justified.

The work accomplished by Christ on the cross is set out to us by divers expressions in the Scriptures. I shall notice a few of them. Our *Justification* in the sight of God is ascribed to the "Blood of Christ." "Being now justified by His blood." (Rom. v. 9). "The blood is the life." (Gen. ix. 4). The blood of the pascal Lamb was the life of the Lamb taken. And so as regards the "Blood of Christ." His Blood shed is His life laid down for the Justification of His people. The Blood of Christ is the death of Christ, and draws our minds to the cross. "The obedience and sprinkling of the Blood of Jesus Christ" is our Justification. There are several passages in which this thought is presented to us. "The Blood of Jesus Christ His Son *cleanseth* us from all sin." (1 John i. 7). "Unto Him that loved us and *washed* us from our sins in His own Blood." "These are they who have *washed* their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." To be cleansed or washed, or justified is the same thing,

and is the effect of the death of Christ. (1 Peter i. 2. Rev. i. 5; vii. 14). Christ was delivered unto death because of our offences and He was raised again because of our justification. (Rom. iv. 25). Christ's death is the believer's justification and life. There is no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus. It is God who justifieth His elect in Christ. Who then is he that condemneth? Christ has died and risen again, and is now at God's right hand making intercession for His blood bought flock. (Rom. viii. 33, 34). *Peace* and *Reconciliation* are ascribed to Christ's work on the cross. "It pleased the Father that in Him"—Jehovah Jesus—"should all fulness dwell; and, having made *peace* by the Blood of His cross, by Him to *reconcile* all things unto Himself; by Him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven. And you, that were sometimes alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath He *reconciled* in the body of His flesh through *death*, to present you holy and unblameable and unproveable in His sight." (Col. i. 19, 22). Here we have Peace and Reconciliation by the death of Christ. The Saviour by His death has brought His people into friendship with the Father. Every hindrance has been removed out of the way. Reflect upon the following words:—"But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the Blood of Christ." This nearness to God is the result of the death of Christ. This nearness denotes access to God, also friendship and fellowship with God through Jesus Christ our Lord. "For He is our peace who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition—Having abolished in His flesh the enmity, the law of commandments in ordinances; for to make in Himself of twain one new man, so making peace; and that He might *reconcile* both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby." Now can be proclaimed the Gospel of peace to the ends of the earth. "And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. For through Him we both have access, by one Spirit unto the

Father." (Eph. ii. 13, 18; 2nd Cor. ii. 14, 15). Let us look at another Scripture upon this point of Peace and Reconciliation with God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Read 2nd Corinthians, 5th chapter, 18th and following verses:—"And all things are of God, Who hath *reconciled* us to Himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation, to wit, that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them." Here the Apostle explains what he means by the world. It is the world of God's chosen. These are the persons to whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity. (Psalm xxx. 1, 2. Rom. iv. 5—9). Now the Ministers of the Gospel have this word of Reconciliation committed to them, that they should preach it to the ingathering of the children of God that are scattered abroad. Peace and Reconciliation by the death of Christ are the outcome of God's great love to the sinner. We are reconciled to God by the death of His Son. And this is the *atonement*, the *reconciliation*, and the *covering* which we have received, and in which we glory. (Rom. v. 8—11). We have Redemption and Forgiveness of sins through the precious blood of Christ. (Eph. i. 7; 1 Peter i. 18, 19). We can now enter with boldness into the holiest by the blood of Christ. (Heb. x. 19). The blood of Christ purifies the conscience. (Heb. ix. 14). The Blood of Christ has purchased the Church of God. (Acts xx. 28). These are some of the blessings which come to us by the death of Christ on the cross. Are we astonished that every thing else appeared insignificant to the Apostle when compared with the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ? He delighted in preaching the cross. He says to the Corinthians: "Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the Gospel." And pray what did he mean by the Gospel? Well, he leaves us not in doubt for he goes on to say: "Not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect. For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God." It is by the preaching

of the cross, that souls are saved. "We preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God." The Apostle was "determined not to know anything among the Corinthians, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified." (1 Cor. i.).

"Sweet the moments, rich in blessing,
Which before the cross I spend
Life, and health, and peace possessing,
From the sinner's dying Friend.
Here I'll sit for ever viewing,
Mercy's streams, in streams of blood;
Precious drops! my soul bedewing,
Plead and claim my peace with God."

I shall now say a few words to you about the cross as it is used for the sufferings and afflictions of the people of God. Our Lord told His disciples, that they would have to take up the cross for His sake. "Then said Jesus unto His disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up *his cross*, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it." (Mat. xvi. 24, 25). The taking up of the cross and bearing it, is an allusion to the criminal carrying the cross on which he was to suffer. The sufferings, the persecutions, and afflictions of the people of God, are a part of the legacy which Christ has left to His followers. No one knew this better than St. Paul. Let us hear his own words: "Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for His body's sake, which is the Church." (Col. i. 24). Paul's sufferings were not for the purpose of taking away sins. Christ's sufferings alone could do this. But a suffering path is the path of the flock. It is given unto them to suffer for Christ's sake. (Phil. i. 29). Patriarchs and prophets have suffered of old for the truth's sake. St. James says: "Take, my brethren the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience." (v. 10). We might here quote from the 11th of

Hebrews the account of the trials, sufferings, and afflictions of those ancient worthies, who endured the cross and despised the shame, looking unto Jesus. In all their afflictions, Jehovah Jesus was afflicted. (Isa. lxiii. 9). Christ and His members suffered together. Our sufferings and afflictions are light compared with the glory that shall follow by and bye. (2 Cor. iv. 17, 18). The Apostle could take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake. (2 Cor. xii. 10). I cannot leave this part of my subject without reading what the Apostle has said of the cross which he had to take up. These are his words: "In labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by my own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness." Well might he exclaim. "Who is weak, and I am not weak"? (2 Cor. xii). But he knew, that when he was weak, then he was strong. The power of Christ was upon him. It is as true now as ever it was, "that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God." The cross shall not be removed, but grace shall be given to bear it. "Faint, yet pursuing."

Let us now consider secondly and briefly the Crucifixion:—"By whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." "By whom," "on which," or "whereby" referring either to Christ or to the cross, or to both. The crucifixion is *twofold*. The world is crucified to the Apostle, and he is crucified to the world. We shall have to explain a little here. What is the *world*? And *how* is the world crucified to the Apostle? What is the answer to these questions?

What is the world? I do not understand by the word "*world*," the material world, or creation in general; but rather the honours, the offices, the riches, and the fashions, which the wicked and ungodly inhabitants of the world seek after, and in which they glory. St. John says, (1 John ii. 14, 15). "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." Here is a sharp line drawn between those who are of the world, and those who are of God. The children of God are *in* the world, but they are not of it. A child of God may possess many of the good things of the world, but they have not his love. But what does the Apostle John say about the world? "For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world." Here is the world under a threefold division. "The lust of the flesh"—Self gratification. This may be in eating and drinking to the satisfying of the pleasures of the flesh. We read of some who "fell a lusting for flesh to eat," and were finally buried in the "graves of lust." (Num. xi). "The lust of the flesh" is manifest in pleasure seeking, worldly amusements, sporting and gambling in every conceivable way, but these things bring their own reward. "He that loveth pleasure shall be a poor man: he that loveth wine and oil shall not be rich." (Prov. xxi. 17). I shall refer those who wish to see more about the works and lusts of the flesh to Galatians v. 19—21. "The lust of the eye." This deals with covetousness and such like. Achan covets a Babylonish garment" together with "silver and gold" and steals them, but he and his are stoned and burnt for so doing. (Joshua vii). Ahab sees, covets, and obtains Naboth's vineyard; but it is a curse to him and not a blessing. (1 Kings xxi). "He that hasteth to be rich hath an evil eye, and considereth not that poverty shall come upon him." (Prov. xxviii. 22). "The pride of life." This is an inordinate desire to be great in ourselves and for ourselves. Self conceit, carnal confidence, seeking to glorify self, to be seen and admired by others,

and to make for ourselves like some of old a name in the earth. (Gen. xi. 4). St. John sums up all these things thus: "And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof." Here is the fleeting, fading, and passing away of everything which is not settled and established in Christ. "But he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever." St. Paul says of the world of which I have been speaking, that it was crucified to him by the crucifixion and death of Christ. This is *how* the world became a dead thing to him. Things which were once gain to him, he counted loss for Christ. He could suffer the loss of all things for his Saviour. Happy Paul!

But the Apostle *was crucified* unto the world. He had been crucified with Christ on the cross and had died there with Him." "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me." The crucifixion and death of Christ on the cross, are also the crucifixion and death of the saints to the world. This is very fully revealed to us in the 6th of Romans. "For if we have been planted together in the likeness of His death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection: knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin." All in Christ are dead to sin, dead to the law, and dead to the world. "Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him: knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over Him. For in that He died, He died unto sin once: but in that He liveth, He liveth unto God." Now comes the Apostolic enforcement of this glorious truth upon christians:—"Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord." There is evidently a complete separation between the Apostle and the world. They were crucified to each other by the crucifixion of Christ. The world had no love for the Apostle, and he had none

for the world. The world hated Christ, and it hated His disciples too. The world loves its own. (John xv. 18, 19). The children of God love their own. They love the Father who first loved them. They love the Saviour who has died for them. And they love the Holy Ghost who has taught them and blessed them with a knowledge of His will. If the christian be crucified with Christ, and is dead to the world, where is he living? He is living *in* Christ, and in communion and fellowship with Him. "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead"—dead by the death of Christ to the world—"and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ Who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory." Glorious hope! By Christ the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world. Is it so with us? Is the experience of the Apostle our experience. Do we realize for ourselves, that the world is crucified to us, and that we are crucified to the world? Are we and the world dead to each other? "They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit."

We shall now proceed with our Third point, which is the glorying of the Apostle:—"But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." What is this glorying? It is rejoicing, boasting and exulting in the Lord. What is man in himself that he should boast? "Man that is born of a woman, is of few days, and full of trouble. He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down: he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not." (Job xiv). "All flesh is as grass, and all the goodness thereof is as the flower of the field: The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: because the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it, surely the people is grass. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever." (Isa. xl). Lord what is man? "Who maketh thee to differ? And what hast thou that thou didst not receive? Now if

thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?" (1 Cor. iv. 7).

The Prophet Jeremiah speaks of boasting, *negatively* and *positively*. (ix. 23, 24). *Negatively*:—"Thus saith the Lord, let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches." If a man should presume to glory in his wisdom, because he may happen to be a bit of a philosopher. Let him remain dumb until he has read the 28th of Job. And if that chapter does not turn his wisdom into folly, then, I venture to say, that you may bray a fool in a mortar with a pestle, and yet his foolishness will not depart from him. (Prov. xxvii. 22). If a man should boast of his "might," or power, let him call to mind the power of the beast of the forest, or of the Leviathan of the deep. And if his might does not become very weakness, then, let him reflect upon the 40th of Isaiah. Here, he will veil his face, and cry:—"Woe is me! for I am undone!" If man should boast in his "riches." Then let him consider what swift and ready wings they have. Riches make to themselves wings and fly away. The man of riches may boast of his wealth to day, but to morrow morning's post may inform him that he is a beggar. If I had the wisdom of Solomon, and the might of Samson, and all the rich treasures of Hezekiah, yet, the Lord says: "Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches." Where then shall boasting and glorying be found? The child of God is safe in his glorying when he glories in that in which the Lord Himself glories.

And now *Positively*, the Lord saith, "But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth Me, that I am the Lord which exercise lovingkindness, judgement and righteousness in the earth: for in these things I delight saith the Lord." Let us see what these things are which have been done in the earth by the Lord. "But of Him are ye in Christ Jesus, Who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and

sanctification, and redemption." These are the things in which the Lord delights and glories, and His children delight and glory in the same. In the text, we have the Apostle boasting, but it is in the Lord. "But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." Why all this boasting and glorying in the Cross work of Christ? Because on *the Cross* Christ magnified the law and made it honourable. THERE, He rendered full satisfaction to its proudest demands and penalties. THERE, He justified the sinner by His blood, or by His death. THERE, He made full atonement for His people. THERE, He made peace by His Blood, and reconciled the whole family in heaven and on earth to his Father, and our Father, to His God, and our God. THERE, He slew the enmity, and took everything out of the way, that the ransomed of the Lord might pass over in safety. THERE, He finished and made an end of iniquity, transgression and sin. THERE, He brought in an everlasting righteousness with which to robe His Saints. THERE, He brought near to God, a countless multitude which no man can number, gathered out of all kindreds, peoples, and tongues. THERE, He obtained eternal redemption for all the elect of God. THERE, He through death destroyed him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and delivered them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. THERE, on the cross, Christ is seen victorious over every foe, and we in Him are led in triumph. Well might the Apostle exclaim; "But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ."

"When I survey the wondrous cross,
On which the Prince of glory died,
My richest gain I count but loss,
And pour contempt on all my pride.

"Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast,
Save in the death of Christ my God,
All the vain things that charm me most,
I sacrifice them to His blood.

"Seel from His head, His hands, His feet,
Sorrow and love flow mingled down!
Did e'er such love and sorrow meet,
Or thorns compose so rich a crown?

"Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were an offering far too small:
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my life, my soul, my all."

“SIR, WE WOULD SEE JESUS.”

A SERMON

PREACHED BY THE

Rev., J. BATTERSBY

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AT VERULAM MISSION CHURCH, KENNINGTON ROAD,

LAMBETH, LONDON,

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In the 12th chapter of St. John's Gospel and at the latter part of the 21st verse, you will read the following words:—

“SIR, WE WOULD SEE JESUS.”

Our Lord was exceedingly popular when the words of our text were addressed by certain Greeks to Philip. It is difficult to determine who these Hellenists were. They may have been Jews who spoke the Greek language; or Proselytes from the Greeks; or pious and devout Gentiles who had come up to worship at Jerusalem at the feast of Passover. These persons, whoever they were, had heard of the fame of Jesus, and were desirous to see Him. Jesus had just raised Lazarus from the dead, and much people of the Jews came to Bethany, that they might see both Jesus and Lazarus—(9th verse). The chief priests consulted together, that they might put Lazarus to death; because by reason of him, many of the Jews believed on Jesus.

Now, when it was noised abroad among much people, that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, they resolved to do Him honour as He entered the holy city, and so : " They took branches of palm trees, and went forth to meet Him, and cried Hosanna ! Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord. This was the popular cry on the Monday, but on the Friday in the same week, the Jews cried :—" Crucify Him, Crucify Him." " His blood be on us and on our children." Popularity is very transient with a godless multitude. The word of prophecy was fulfilled in both instances. " And Jesus, when He found a young ass, sat thereon ; as it is written, Fear not, daughter of Zion : behold, thy King cometh, sitting on an ass's colt." The disciples did not understand these things at the time, but afterwards they did. Those who had witnessed the resurrection of Lazarus bore record of the miracle, and the people went forth to meet Jesus. The Pharisees exclaim :—" Behold, the world is gone after Him." Amongst those who wished to see Jesus were " certain Greeks." They made their wish known to Philip, and Philip told Andrew, and then Andrew and Philip tell Jesus. Our Lord's answer is given in the 23rd and following verses to which I refer you.

We shall now proceed to consider, First, the natural curiosity of these Greeks :—" They would see Jesus ;" Secondly, the spiritual desire of all believers is :—" That they would see Jesus ;" and then, we shall conclude by pointing out to you some of the accompanying effects of seeing Jesus spiritually. I hope, that under these heads, I shall be able to lay before you some of the leading truths of the Gospel of the grace of God, as they have been presented to my own mind. May the Spirit of God help us to unfold and to understand the Gospel in its fulness and blessing for Christ's sake.

We shall now take up our first point : the natural curiosity of these Greeks. They said to Philip, Lord, " we desire to see Jesus." Whether there was anything beyond a natural curiosity in these Greeks, which led them to desire to see Jesus, and to have an interview with Him,

we are not told. I do not wish to be too inquisitive in this matter. There were, however, those in our Lord's time, who out of natural curiosity desired to see Him, and in seeing Him received a blessing. I shall now give you one or two examples in proof of what I say. Take the case of the Samaritans, for it is said of them, that they came out of the city to Him, and after they had seen Him and heard Him for themselves, they believed Him to be the Christ of God, the Saviour of the world. (John iv. 40-42). If these Samaritans had no other motive than natural curiosity to see Jesus, yet they were blessed in seeing Him. Now, Zacchæus was a man "who sought to see Jesus who He was; and could not for the press, because he was little of stature." But he must resort to some means for the purpose of gratifying his curiosity—So "he ran before, and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see Him: for He was to pass that way. And when Jesus came to the place, He looked up, and saw him, and said unto him Zacchæus, make haste and come down; for to-day I must abide at thy house." I will vouch that Zacchæus came down more quickly than he went up. He made haste to get up, but I fancy he made more to get down. He had heard the voice of Jesus sounding in his ears:—"Zacchæus, make haste and come down; for to-day I must abide at thy house." "And he made haste, and came down, and received Him joyfully." The pharisaical people murmured when they saw that Jesus went to be guest with a man that was a sinner. Zacchæus was immediately filled with gratitude and charity. Jesus spake kindly to him:—"This day is Salvation come to this house, forasmuch as he also is a son of Abraham. For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." This was one of the happiest days Zacchæus ever spent in his life. The Saviour is his guest, and Salvation is the theme of discourse. Jesus comes not to make an offer of Salvation, or to give a person a chance of being saved, but He comes to *seek* and to *save* the lost. He knows where to find all his Zacchæuses. If they get into a tree; or under a tree like Nathaniel, yet they

cannot get out of His sight, His eye is upon them. Well, Zacchæus's natural curiosity to see Jesus had a blessing attending it. (Luke xix.). Many who had infirmities sought to see and to touch Jesus, and we are told, that as many as touched Him were made perfectly whole. What a blessing.

Some desired to see Jesus, but were not blessed when they saw Him. Such was Herod, who when he saw Jesus was exceeding glad : for he was desirous of seeing Him for a long time, because he had heard so many things of Him ; and he hoped to have seen some miracle done by Him. But he was disappointed. His carnal curiosity was not satisfied. And then he and those with him set Jesus at nought and mocked Him, arraying Him in a gorgeous robe. This was their revenge. (Luke xxiii. 8-11). We read of others in the 6th of John who sought to see Jesus, because they had eaten of the loaves and were filled. We do not hear of any spiritual blessing resting upon them. They had seen Jesus and the miracles which He had wrought, but, they believed not on Him. (verse 36). Many were the miracles which Jesus did before the Jews, yet they believed not on Him. How was this ? Our Lord gives the reason in this very chapter—"That the saying of Esaias the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report ? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed ? Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again, He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart, that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them." (verses 37 to 41). You will see from what I have said, that a mere carnal sight of the Lord Jesus, is no guarantee of spiritual life and blessing. To see and know Jesus after the flesh is no pledge of heaven and glory. To see miracles performed by Jesus Himself will not convert a soul. We can only see Jesus spiritually when the miracle of grace is wrought in our hearts by the power of the Holy Ghost. When He speaks effectually within then all the earth must keep silence before Him.

Now there were those who did see Jesus and rejoice in Him when he was here on earth. We read of two of John's disciples who beheld Him as the Lamb of God. Andrew, and Simon, and Philip, could say, "We have found Him, of Whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth." Nathaniel may have doubted, but his doubts were soon removed. Let us just read the account of the interview as given by St. John (i. 45-49). "Philip findeth Nathaniel, and saith unto him, We have found Him of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph. And Nathaniel said unto him, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, Come and see." We have then our Lord's testimony to Nathaniel. "Jesus saw Nathaniel coming to Him, and saith of Him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile! Nathaniel saith unto Him, Whence knowest thou me? Jesus answered and said unto him, Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee." What would Nathaniel be doing under the fig tree? We venture to say that he would be reading and meditating upon some portion of Scripture, and supplicating his Heavenly Father for a blessing upon the same. But what is Nathaniel's exclamation after seeing and hearing Jesus? "Nathaniel answered and saith unto Him, Rabbi, Thou art the Son of God; Thou art the King of Israel." This was a most blessed and delightful sight which Nathaniel had of Him who is the Only Begotten Son of God, full of grace and truth. Our Lord favoured His own with many interviews, and gave them many precious sights of Himself and Gospel. The disciples of our Lord were privileged above the Patriarchs and prophets of old, though they had prospectively seen the day of Christ and rejoiced in it, yet they had not seen Him as the Word made flesh as the disciples saw Him. Jesus spake *privately* to His disciples, and said:—"Blessed are the eyes which see the things that ye see: For I tell you, that many prophets and kings have desired to see those things which ye see and have

not seen them ; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them." (Luke x. 23-24). When Jesus was about to leave His disciples, He told them, that a little while and they should not see Him, and again a little while and they should see Him. Their hearts were filled with sorrow at the thought of His leaving them. "And ye now therefore have sorrow : but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you." (John xvi. 22). Jesus kept His word and shewed Himself to His disciples after His Resurrection. Indeed, the Saviour favoured His disciples with many precious and glorious sights of Himself whilst He was here on earth. They beheld his glory—the glory of His Person—the glory of His power as displayed in His miracles—and the glory of His wisdom as manifested in His teaching and counsel. On the holy mount he is transfigured before three of His disciples, and they behold His glorious majesty. At the last Supper He appeared to His disciples in the glory of His humility. "He was among them as one that serveth." (Luke xxii. 27. John xiii.) He prays to His Father for His disciples before His death, that they may behold His glory. (John xvii. 24). They saw Him after His Resurrection, and their hearts were filled with joy and gladness. They saw Him as He ascended to heaven from mount Olivet:—"And when He had spoken these things, while they beheld, He was taken up ; and a cloud received Him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold two men stood by them in white apparel ; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven ? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven." (Acts ii. 9-11). Behold, He cometh again, and the Redeemed of the Lord shall see the King, the Lord of hosts. Glorious indeed will be the sight we shall then have of Jehovah Jesus. Blessed be God, we shall not only see him, as He is, but we shall be like Him. Then, Blessed Saviour, when I see Thee

as Thou art, I will praise Thee as I ought. I desire to see Jesus ! But to proceed :—

Consider Secondly, the spiritual desire of all believers is:— “*That they would see Jesus.*” The natural man has not got spiritual eyes to see Jesus withal. Hence, he must first have spiritual eyesight given to him before he can see Jesus spiritually. Let me shew you this from one Scripture which is sufficient to convince my own mind, and I hope yours :—It is written, eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him. But God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit : for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea the deep things of God.” The Apostle proceeds to illustrate his point : “For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man, which is in him ? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God ; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man’s wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth ; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God : for they are foolishness unto him. Neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.” I beseech you my brethren to consider and reflect upon these words again and again. “But he that is spiritual judgeth,” or discerneth, or seeth, “all things, yet he himself is judged of no man.” (1 Cor. ii. 9-15). What stronger proof could I give you, than the one I have given, that before a person can see Jesus spiritually, he must be a spiritual man, and possess spiritual eyesight. If I were to fail in putting this truth clearly before you at the outset, I should make a very great mistake indeed. They *who* see Jesus spiritually are born from above of the Spirit of God.

How do believers see Jesus spiritually ? Our answer is, they see Him in His own light. “In *Thy light* shall we see light.” (Psalm xxxvi. 9). God is light, and in Him

is no darkness at all. He sent His Son to be the light of the world. The Spirit of God leads persons to Jesus as the true and only Light in whom believers can see light—the light of God. We can only see the Sun by his own light, and so it is with Jesus. “We preach Christ Jesus the Lord.” Why? “For God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the *face* of Jesus Christ.” (2 Cor. iv. 6). This is *How* we see Jesus spiritually. And this treasure we have in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us. The Father draws us to Jesus the true light—and Jesus draws us to Himself as the true light which lighteneth every man coming into the world. And the Holy Ghost draws us to Jesus, enlightening the understanding, and enabling us to see in Him, the light, the beauty, and the glory of our Salvation.

What do believers see in Jesus spiritually? They see in Him a Divine Teacher come from God. They see in Him the great High Priest who has passed into the heavens, and Who can be touched with the feelings of their infirmities. They see in Him the King of kings, Who can subdue all their enemies and conquer every foe. They see in Him the good Physician who healeth all their diseases. They see in Him the good Shepherd who giveth His life for the sheep, watches over them, provides for them, and leads them into green pastures. They see in Him a Friend who sticketh closer than a brother. They see in Him their Elder Brother who is born for adversity. Indeed, they behold Him as the “Altogether lovely.” “What is thy Beloved more than another beloved, O thou fairest among women? What is thy Beloved more than another beloved, that thou dost so charge us?” Then follows the answer:—“My Beloved is white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand”—“Yea He is altogether lovely. This is my Beloved, and this is my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem.” (Song v.). Now, Jesus Himself informs us that they who see Him see the Father also. “He that seeth Me

seeth Him that sent Me." Philip said to Jesus, "shew us the Father." Our Lord replied, "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father." Christ is in the Father, and the Father is in Christ, they are one. Such is the teaching of our Lord Himself. (John xiv. 8-11). In Christ dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. (Col. ii. 9). Christ is the brightness of the Father's glory and the express image of His Person. (Heb. i. 3). All the perfections of the Godhead are seen in Jehovah Jesus. The perfection of wisdom and knowledge, the perfection of love and mercy, the perfection of grace and goodness, the perfection of truth and faithfulness, the perfection of righteousness and holiness, are all treasured up, and seen in our adorable Lord. He who has seen Jehovah Jesus with a spiritual eye has seen the Father also. How important is the question to each one of us—Have I seen Jesus as already described? My beloved brethren what have I seen in Jesus? The answer must be given to each person's soul, and not to him who is now addressing you.

Where do believers see Jesus? They see Him in the glass of His Word. Their eyes see the Salvation of God. If they look into the Old Testament, they see Jesus in the *Types*. They see Him in the manna, for Jesus is the true bread which cometh down from heaven. They see Him in the smitten Rock, for that Rock was Christ. They see Him in the Passover Lamb, for Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us. They see Him in the Mercy-seat, for Christ is the meeting place for God and the sinner. They see Him in the brazen serpent, for "as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: That whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Again, they see Jesus in the *Prophecies* of the Old Testament—Prophecies which predict His birth, His life, His sufferings and death, His Resurrection, Ascension, and Glory. They see Him also in the promises. "For all the promises of God in Him are yea, and in Him Amen, unto the glory of God by us." *Where* do they see Him?

It may be on the mount or in the valley. Jacob saw Him face to face at Peniel. (Gen. xxxii. 30). And Moses saw Him at mount Horeb. And Joshua saw Him by Jericho as Captain of the Lord's host. Isaiah saw Him on the throne of His glory. An enraged and furious king saw the Son of God in the midst of the fiery furnace. Saul saw Him when he was on his way to Damascus, and the Apostle John saw Him in the midst of the seven candlesticks. There is *one particular spot* I cannot pass without noticing. Jesus took three of His disciples into the holy mountain *apart*, and was transfigured before them, His face shone as the Sun, and His raiment was white as the light. The disciples knew it was good to be there. But soon a bright cloud overshadowed them, and they heard a voice which brought them to the earth in fear and trembling. Jesus in compassion touched them, and said, "Arise, and be not afraid. And when they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no man, save *Jesus only*." To be with *Jesus only*, and *alone*—Oh! How delightful. Moses is gone. Elijah is gone. No more about tabernacles. *Jesus only* is to be their theme henceforth and for ever. Peter speaks well of this interview in his 2nd Epistle, saying, "We were eyewitnesses of His majesty. For He received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to Him from the excellent glory, This is My Beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased." This mount was a glorious meeting place for Jesus and His disciples. "In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen." And in this holy mount Jesus was seen. Oh! for a few moments with *Jesus alone! Jesus only!!* We cannot fix the time for seeing Jesus. He shews Himself as He pleases. The Church of old knew this. She has said, "I sought Him, but I found Him not." Sometimes she hears the voice of her Beloved, saying, "Open to Me." She rises, and "opens to her beloved, but He has withdrawn Himself, and gone." (Song v. 2-8). Oh, Lord Jesus, let me see Thy face, and the Light of thy countenance and then, I shall be whole.

When do believers see Jesus? They are not always

favoured with a sight of Him. No doubt, they desire to see Jesus *always*. But this is not to be their lot in their time state. Let me illustrate my meaning: The disciples did not see our Lord always during the six weeks after His Resurrection, but they saw Him sufficiently to make their hearts rejoice and their souls to be right glad. You remember the story of our Lord's interview with two of His disciples who were going to Emmaus. The eyes of the disciples were holden and they knew not Jesus. After their conversation with Him, they constrained Him to tarry with them. "And it came to pass, as He sat at meat with them, He took bread, and blessed, and brake, and gave to them. And their eyes were opened, and they knew Him; and He vanished out of their sight." Or "*He ceased to be seen of them.*" How true is this in our own experience. If He shews Himself at times, He ceases again to be seen of us. The disciples confessed that their heart burnt within them whilst Jesus talked to them by the way and opened to them the Scriptures. They at once returned to Jerusalem to tell the eleven and others what had happened, and how Jesus was known of them in breaking of bread. And whilst they were relating their story, Jesus appeared in the midst of them, and said, "Peace be unto you." They were terrified and affrighted at first, but afterwards, when He had shewn Himself to them as the very Christ of God, Who had been crucified and slain, they rejoiced. "Then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord." (Luke xxiv. John xxi. 20). I think we may fairly infer from what has been said, that Jesus shows Himself *when* He pleases, *where* He pleases, and to *whom* He pleases.

Why do believers desire to see Jesus? Take a few reasons. (1) Their only hope of salvation is in Jesus. There is Salvation in no other: for there is no other Name under heaven given among men, whereby they must be saved. (2) They desire to see Jesus, because their comfort and consolation are in Him. (3) They desire to see Jesus for He is the Author and finisher of their faith. (4) They desire to see Jesus, as the anchor

of their soul both sure and steadfast. (5) They desire to see Jesus that they may have communion and fellowship with Him. (6) They desire to see Jesus and to hear His encouraging voice, saying :—

“ Art thou weary, art thou languid,
 Art thou sore distressed ?
 “ Come to Me,” saith One, “ and coming,
 Be at rest.”

I shall now notice some of the accompanying effects, marks or evidences, of seeing Jesus spiritually. One of the first effects is *humiliation and self-loathing*. Job cried out when he saw the Lord : “ I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear : but now mine eye seeth Thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.” (xlii. 5, 6). He felt himself to be very vile when he saw Jehovah. And so it was with Isaiah when he saw the Lord sitting upon the throne of His glory : “ Woe is me ! for I am undone ; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips : for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts.” (vi. 5). One spiritual sight of Jehovah Jesus in His glory and beauty will prostrate the sensible sinner in dust and ashes at His feet. It is a safe place to be at the feet of Jesus, and to hear what He will say unto us. He is sure to speak kindly, compassionately, and affectionately. Have you had such a humbling view of Jesus as the one which I have mentioned ?

Prayer is an accompanying effect of seeing Jesus spiritually. St. Paul was struck down by the light which shone round about him when he was on his way to Damascus to persecute the disciples of Jesus. But he heard the voice of Jesus and trembled, and prayed. For it is said of him :—“ *Behold he prayeth.*” We have not the details of his prayer, but we have the fact. “ *Behold he prayeth.*” He may have said his prayers many times before, but now he prays, now he longs, now he desires, now he thirsts for God, yea even for the living God in Christ Jesus. When we get a spiritual sight of Jesus, we must cry out. There is no help for it. It may be prayer, or it may be praise, but a cry will escape unto Him Whom we love, and desire to adore.

Faith is an accompanying effect of seeing Jesus spiritually.

What is faith, but the spiritual eye which sees Jesus. The natural eye sees Him not. How abundant the Scriptures are upon this point. Everyone which seeth the Son, and believeth in Him, hath everlasting life. (John vi. 40). Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence or proof of things not seen. We are looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith. (Heb. xi. 1. xii. 2). We look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal. (2 Cor. iv. 18). The spiritual eye of faith penetrates into that within the veil, and deals with Jesus as He sits upon the throne of His Mercy seat. Who is the great Conqueror and Overcomer of the world? Who? "He that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God." I would recommend you to read the 11th of Hebrews, in which you have a record of the triumphs of faith in Jesus. The believer prefers the reproach of Christ to the riches of the world, and chooses rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. This is the faith which accompanies a spiritual sight of Jehovah Jesus, the King of kings, and Lord of lords.

Hope is an accompanying effect of seeing Jesus spiritually.

What could a believer do without hope? If he had no hope in Christ, he would be of all men the most miserable. But he has a living hope in Christ—"For God according to His abundant mercy hath begotten him again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." This is a hope of seeing Jesus as He is: "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but, we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is." Now such a hope as this in Christ tends to purification of life. "And every man that hath this hope in Him," that is, in Christ, "purifieth himself, even as He is pure." (1 John iii. 2, 3). Oh! for such a spiritual sight of Christ, that my hope in Him may always abound. Hope thou in Jesus, O my soul—Hope on—Hope ever.

Love also is an accompanying effect of seeing Jesus spiritually. "Whom having not seen ye love." (1 Peter i. 8). This is a Christian grace, and is described by St. Paul as one of the greatest. (1 Cor. xiii.). Our Lord tested His disciples by this grace of love. "If ye love Me, keep my commandments." "He that hath My commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me." "If a man love Me, he will keep My words." And so we might go on quoting from the 14th of St. John. The question is: Do we love Jesus? Do we love Him as a Divine Person? Do we love Him, because of the great love wherewith He loved us? Does the love of Christ constrain us to love Him as our God and Saviour? Jesus, Thy love has broken every barrier down, and now, I desire to be Thine, yea Thine alone, for ever and ever.

Liberty is an accompanying effect of seeing Jesus spiritually. "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." Every believer is born of God, and is a free man in Christ Jesus. He has been made a free man by the King of kings. "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." Free from every charge of sin. Free to serve the Lord without fear. Free to draw near to God through Christ Jesus. Every child of God is a free man and a citizen of no mean city. The city to which he belongs is a great city, a holy city, a heavenly city, a city which has the glory of God to lighten it, and the Lamb to be the light thereof. Wherever there is real liberty, you will have real spiritual life in the heart, and real spiritual light in the understanding. Life and light and liberty go together in our experience of seeing Jesus spiritually.

Joy and delight are accompanying effects of seeing Jesus spiritually. This is clear from the words of St. Peter. (1 Epistle i. 8). "Whom having not seen, ye love; in Whom, though now ye see Him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory." Believers do joy in God in Christ Jesus. They worship God in the spirit, they rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh. Rejoice in the Lord alway, and

again, I say, rejoice. Delight thyself in the Lord, for He has done marvellous things already, and will still bring mighty things to pass. Plead His promise:—"The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose." How descriptive are the wilderness, the solitary place, and the desert, of spiritual desolation—whilst gladness, rejoicing, and blossoming as the rose are signs of spiritual prosperity. "The wilderness shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing." Then follow three beautiful illustrations: "The glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it," which denotes *majesty*. "The excellency of Carmel," which denotes *beauty*. "And the excellency of Sharon," which denotes *fertility*. The *majesty* of Lebanon, the *beauty* of Carmel, and the *fertility* of Sharon shall be the portion of the desolate in Zion. "They shall see the glory of the Lord, and the excellency of our God." (Isa. xxxv.). And in Whom do they see this glory and this excellency? We behold the glory of the Lord, and the excellency of our God in the face of Jesus Christ. Hence we joy, rejoice, and delight ourselves in Christ Jesus when we see Him spiritually.

Believers on seeing Jesus spiritually are changed into His image. Hear ye the words of the Apostle:—"But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the *same image* from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." (2 Cor. iii. 18). Notice these words:—"We all with open face." We are not veiled like Moses, nor blinded like the Jews, but being enlightened by the Spirit of God, we see clearly and distinctly—"Beholding as in a glass"—What is this glass? My answer is, that it is the Gospel as made manifest by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is in this glass of the Gospel, "we behold the glory of the Lord." In this glass, we behold the glory of Jehovah Father in the gift of His Son for the Redemption of His people. In this glass, we behold the glory of Jehovah Jesus as God man Mediator full of grace and truth. In this glass, we behold the glory of

the Spirit working in every vessel of mercy severally as He will. Now, as believers behold the glory of the Lord in the glass of His word, "they are changed into the *same image*." Or in other words, the image of Christ is impressed upon them. This image of Christ consists in knowledge, righteousness, and true holiness. This is the new man. This is Christ in the believer, the hope of glory. This change into the image of Christ is said to be "from glory to glory." This is significant of growth. Believers do grow up into Christ in all things. Grace begun in the soul is glory in the bud, but glory in heaven is grace in the full blown flower. Now, He Who worketh all things in us, is the "Spirit of the Lord." He regenerates, renews, and completes His work in us. And in the resurrection morning, He will quicken us, and rest upon us as the Spirit of glory for ever. Then shall our body of humiliation be like Christ's body of glory. We desire to see Jesus, and we shall see Him in all His glory and beauty, and we shall be like Him too. Glorious hope !

I must now conclude this subject. I have shewn you, that some desired to see Jesus out of natural curiosity and were blessed in seeing Him. That others saw Him out of natural curiosity and were not blessed. And that His own disciples were specially favoured with sights of and interviews with Him, and rejoiced greatly in their privileges. I have also shewn you *who* alone do see Jesus spiritually—*How* they see Him—*What* they see in Him—*Where* they see Him—*When* they see Him—And *why* they see Him. I have also given you some of the *accompanying effects* of seeing Jesus spiritually. And now, may the effects which have been named, be abundantly produced in your hearts and mine by the power of the Holy Ghost to the glory of God the Father through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour. Amen ! and Amen ! !

“AS THY DAYS, SO SHALL THY STRENGTH BE.”

A SERMON

PREACHED BY THE

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AT VERULAM MISSION CHURCH, KENNINGTON ROAD,
LAMBETH, LONDON,

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In the 33rd chapter of the Book of Deuteronomy and at the 25th verse, you will read :—

“THY SHOES SHALL BE IRON AND BRASS, AND AS THY
DAYS, SO SHALL THY STRENGTH BE.”

The words of our text were originally spoken of the tribe of Asher. There are very few histories in the Word of God which are more interesting as subjects of study than those of the twelve tribes of Israel. Whether we consider the significance of the *name* of the head of each tribe as given to him at his birth; or the *prophecies* as delivered by Jacob respecting him and his descendants; or the *promised blessings* as declared by Moses, we shall discover in each branch of these subjects a neverfailing source of interest and profit. In

the study of the name of each tribe, there is much instruction to be gained. In tracing and observing the fulfilment of the prophecies concerning the descendants of each, we see the Providence of God in the accomplishment of His own purpose and grace. And in meditating upon the blessings promised to Asher and to Israel as a whole, we behold the unbounded goodness of God to His own highly favoured people. "The Lord hath chosen Jacob unto Himself, and Israel for His peculiar treasure." God has kept his word with Israel.

I am desirous of bringing before you some of the things which are expressly spoken of the tribe of Asher, or of Asher and his offspring. The meaning of Asher is "Happy." Although he was the son of Zilpah, yet, Leah said at his birth, "Happy am I, for the daughters will call me blessed ; and she called his name Asher." (Gen. xxx. 13.). Some persons may say, there is nothing in a name and others may say there is everything in a name. One thing however, is certain, that there is a striking resemblance between the name given to each tribe of the children of Israel and their subsequent history. This fact, I think, must impress itself upon a mere casual reader of God's Word.

We shall now proceed to speak of Asher under two heads, First, the Prophecies respecting him, and Secondly, the promises made to him. I wish you to understand, that when I speak of Asher, I mean Asher and his descendants. My meaning will be, as if I were to say, the tribe of Asher. It may be unnecessary for me to give this explanation, but I think it better to do so to avoid any misunderstanding. I intend also, as I proceed, to shew the spiritual bearing of the subject to the children of God.

Let us consider, First, the Prophecies respecting Asher. Here, I shall have to turn your attention to Jacob's prophecy respecting him as contained in the 49th of Genesis:—"Out of Asher his bread shall be fat, and he shall yield royal dainties." (Verse 20.) In connection with this verse, I would ask you to read the blessing of

Moses as given in the verse which precedes our text :—
 “And of Asher he said, let Asher be blessed with children ; let him be acceptable to his brethren, and let him dip his foot in oil.” If we take these two verses together and treat them as *prophetical*, we shall see how literally they have been fulfilled in the order of God’s Providence. Asher was to be largely blessed with children. We read in the 1st of Numbers that each tribe was numbered in the 2nd year after they came out of Egypt. The tribe of Asher numbered 41,500 who were twenty years old and upward, all that were able to go forth to war. (Verses 40-41.) And although this large number perished in the wilderness, yet before the tribe entered into the land of Canaan it had increased to 53,400. (Num. xxvi. 47). Or nearly 12,000 fighting men more than they numbered about thirty eight years before. There was a literal accomplishment of the words :—“He shall be blessed with children.” Now those who were blessed with children were esteemed as highly favoured of the Lord. The blessing of the Lord was with Asher. On him rested the blessing of the 128th Psalm :—“Blessed is every one that feareth the Lord, that walketh in his ways. For thou shalt eat the labour of thine hands : happy shalt thou be, and it shall be well with thee. Thy wife shall be as a fruitful vine by the sides of thine house : thy children like olive plants round about thy table. Behold, that thus shall the man be blessed that feareth the Lord. The Lord shall bless thee out of Zion ! and thou shalt see the good of Jerusalem all the days of thy life. Yea thou shalt see thy children’s children, and peace upon Israel.” I think we may very fairly conclude from the blessing which was to accompany Asher and his descendants, that they were a god fearing tribe as a whole. Anna a prophetess of the Lord was of this tribe of Asher. She was one of those waiting for the Redemption of Israel. (Luke ii. 36). Twelve thousand of this tribe are among the sealed servants of God, and stand with the Lamb on Mount Zion. (Rev. vii. and xiv).

This tribe was to be acceptable to his brethren. "Let him be acceptable to his brethren." Literally so, because he was to dwell in a land which would produce plenty of bread, wine, and oil, and other dainties. "His bread shall be fat, and he shall yield royal dainties," and if he think fit "he shall dip his feet in oil," for he shall possess every good thing in abundance. Some of the richest parts of the land of Canaan such as Carmel and Sharon, were allotted to this tribe. I refer you to Joshua xix. 24 to 31. Some of the good things from this tribe found their way to King Solomon's household. (Kings iv. 7-16). To be acceptable to our brethren is a blessing from the Lord. But we must first be accepted of God in the Beloved, Jehovah Jesus. (Eph. i. 6). It is said of Jesus that "He increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man." (Luke ii. 52.). This is a very remarkable passage. The *despised One*, and yet the *Holy One* and the *Just* "increasing in wisdom and stature." He was verily a man, and as the Spirit of Wisdom descended upon Him and rested upon Him, He became of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord. (Isa. xi). As His body increased in stature, so did His spirit in wisdom and knowledge. May it be so with us, that we grow up "unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." (Ephesians iv. 13). In what sense could Jesus increase in favour with God? I take it that God shewed His approbation of Him when He bestowed upon Him such fulness of grace and gifts. Jesus was the special object of the Father's choice, and from eternity, He had been His Father's darling and delight, but now it is *openly manifest* that He is the object of His favour. Jesus also increased in favour with man, that is in favour with His brethren. He had their approbation, for they shewed their high appreciation of Him. It is so now with His spiritually called and taught brethren, they speak well of Him, and in their esteem, He appears as the choicest among ten thousand and the altogether lovely. He is acceptable to His brethren. It is a great

privilege and favour for us to be acceptable to our spiritual brethren. The children of God are not at all likely to be acceptable to the world, any more than the Asherites were to the Canaanites amongst whom they dwelt. The brethren of Jesus will be acceptable to each other, because they are acceptable to God in the Beloved.

“*Out of Asher his bread shall be fat.*” It is clear from these words that Asher should be well sustained, and nourished. “His bread shall be fat,” or oily. This is language well suited to bring before us the Gospel as it is revealed to us in the Old Testament. The Gospel is beautifully set forth by Isaiah, as a feast of *fat things*. “And in this mountain shall the Lord of hosts make unto all people a feast of *fat things*, a feast of wines on the lees, of *fat things* full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined.” (xxv. 6). There are three words which often occur together in the Scriptures—“Corn, and wine, and oil.” (Deu. xi. 14). Wine refreshes and gladdens the heart of man, oil makes his face to shine, and bread strengthens his heart.” (Psalm civ. 15). The souls of the righteous can be satisfied with nothing less than the “marrow and fatness” of the Gospel. God has promised to satiate the souls of His priests with fatness, and to satisfy His people with His goodness. (Jer. xxxi. 14). “His bread shall be fat.” Or his bread shall be nourishing and sustaining. What is the Gospel bread? It is Christ, for He says, “I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is My flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.” (John vi. 51). Christ is the true bread of fatness which will feed thee, strengthen thee, nourish thee, sustain thee and support thee for ever. Thy heart is also refreshed with the wine of His love. “His love is better than wine.” When Jehovah Jesus brings His own into His banqueting house—or into His house of feasting—and stays them with flagons of wine, then His banner over them is love. (Song ii). Now, “oil” as a figure is used for the grace

or Spirit of God. The Spirit of the Lord in a person is called the "oil of joy." (Isa. lxi. 3). Christ Himself was anointed with the oil of gladness above His fellows. And all believers in Him have an anointing from Him. "Ye have an unction from the Holy One"—and this unction or anointing abides in the children of God. How important it is for each of us to ask ourselves—Have we been made partakers of the living bread of fatness? Have we been revived and refreshed with the love of Christ, the good old wine of the kingdom? Have our faces been made to shine, because our hearts have been filled with the grace of the Spirit of Christ? Can we say, "O God, Thou hast abundantly satisfied us with the fatness of Thy house, Thou hast made us to drink of the river of Thy pleasures."!

"*And he shall yield royal dainties.*" The idea contained in these words is this, that Asher shall not only have enough for himself, but he shall be the means of supplying others also. His cup shall be filled to running over. When the children of God have been abundantly blessed in their own souls, they become the means of blessing to others. They do not eat their bread in secret and alone, but break it to their brethren. Now, what are these "*royal dainties?*" or "*delicacies of the King?*" I shall not delay your minds by dwelling upon these words and their primary meaning and application, for I have already done so. *The dainties of the King—The delicacies of the King.* What King? "My heart is inditing a good matter: I speak of the things which I have made touching the King." The Holy Ghost has told us that this 45th Psalm refers to King Jesus. The beauty of His Person is described in the 2nd verse. His glory, majesty, and victory are set forth in the 3rd, 4th, and 5th verses. His Godhead, government, grace, and fragrance are portrayed in the 6th, 7th, and 8th verses. These are some of the Personal delicacies and dainties of the King of kings. But generally the word "*dainties*" is associated with food, or with something which is pleasing and delicious to the taste or palate. We speak of "*dainty meat,*" of "*pleasant fruit,*" of a "*nice* and

delicious wine." The Lord Himself has made a feast and prepared a table for those who are spiritually poor and needy. The guests have "*dainty meat*" set before them. Christ is the food of believers as He is revealed in the Word of God. And what "*sweet and pleasant fruit!*" "I sat down under His shadow with great delight, and His fruit was sweet to my taste." The promises of God are so sweet and so pleasant to the taste that they are like "apples of gold set in pictures of silver." The choice wine of the Saviour's love is not only delicious, but delightful and cheering. Joseph and his brethren drank and were merry together, so it is with Christ and His guests. Take one verse as descriptive of this mutual love feast:—"I am come into my garden, my sister, my spouse: I have gathered my myrrh with my spice; I have eaten my honeycomb with my honey; I have drank my wine with my milk: eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved." (Song v. 1.) We shall now pass on from our first head, as I wish to dwell more fully upon our second. May God help and guide us aright for Christ's sake.

We shall now consider Secondly the Promises made to Asher as contained in the text:—"Thy shoes, or under thy shoes, shall be iron and brass; and as thy days, so shall thy strength be." There is evidently implied in this verse a *Journey*. The descendants of Asher were to be travellers, and as such would stand in need of durable shoes. Their shoes were to be iron and brass. They were to be well supported and strengthened in their journey. "As thy days, thy strength shall be." I shall take this verse as descriptive of the Christian as a pilgrim here on earth, for believers are "strangers and pilgrims on the earth." (1) There is a *Journey* implied; (2) there is the *preparation* for it; and (3) there is *strength* promised.

The Journey of the Christian Pilgrim. Whence does he journey? What is the place he starts from? It is quite clear to my own mind that every person coming into this world is born on the "*mount of corruption*," in the high places of wickedness and idolatry (2 Kings,

xxiii., 13). Man is corrupted at the fountain. All flesh has corrupted his way upon the earth. (Gen. vi., 12.) This thought is often repeated in the Scriptures:—"They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is not one that doeth good." (Psalm xiv.) Now Hezekiah tells us what it is to be delivered from corruption. "Behold, for peace I had great bitterness: but Thou hast in love to my soul delivered it from the pit of corruption; for Thou hast cast all my sins behind Thy back." (Isaiah xxxviii. 17.) This is escaping the corruption that is in the world. (2 Peter i. 4.) Jonah knew what it was to be brought up from corruption when he exclaimed: "Thou hast brought up my life from corruption, O Lord my God." (ii. 6.) The new creature is delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. (Rom. viii. 21). This is the starting place. Deliverance from the mount of corruption—deliverance from thyself and thy sins. As long as thou art "tied and bound with the chain of thy sins," thou art in bondage to corruption. Thou art not a Zion bound pilgrim, but a slave. Deliverance from corruption is by the blood of the Lamb, sealed and ratified by the Holy Ghost. This is the starting point.

Whither is the Christian pilgrim going? We are at no loss to answer this question. He is making his way to the *delectable mountains*, to the heavenly country where there is the heavenly city filled with the glory of God and the light of the Lamb. The Old Testament worthies looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. They knew that they had no continuing city here, but they sought one to come. They embraced the promise of God, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. They longed for the heavenly country, the incorruptible, undefiled and never fading inheritance. God was not ashamed to be called their God; for He had prepared for them an abiding city. Whither are ye wending your way? Are your faces set upon Zion? Do you know anything about the glorious city of the

great King? Have you a desire to be with the spirits of just men made perfect?

The way the Christian pilgrim has to go. There is but *One way* from the mount of corruption to the mount of incorruption. Jesus says, "I AM THE WAY." He is the *Only way* to the Father which is *sure* and *safe*. Bunyan says, there are many "by-paths," which are very much trodden, but they do not lead to the royal city. The main road seems to be almost forsaken, because there are so few to be found upon it. Travellers seem to have forgotten the direction, if they ever heard it:—"Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leads to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." (Mat. vii. 13, 14). The way to destruction is broad, and there are many travellers. The way to heaven is narrow, and there are few travellers. The King's highway is thus described by the Prophet Isaiah (xxxv.): "And a highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness." This is the way, and the only way, of the saints, and they are not many. "The unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein." Now you see who they are, that shall not go on this way of holiness. They are the "unclean," "the unwashed in the blood of Jesus," "the unsanctified by the Spirit." But the wayfaring men, though fools in the estimation of this world, shall not miss their way, nor err therein. Satan and the ungodly are further described:—"No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there." How delightful! Who then shall be found on this highway? "But the redeemed shall walk there: And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." This way may appear *experimentally* a round-about way, but it is the Lord's way. And it is a way which the

spiritually blind know not. The travellers often think that it is a "solitary way," and yet it is the "right way" to the city of habitation.

Now, there are difficulties attending the pilgrim's Journey. Satan will try his tricks upon the Christian. Hence, beware of his subtle devices. The wiles of the devil are many. His fiery darts will often be hurled at you. Remember, that the whole Christian life is one of conflict. He has to wrestle against flesh and blood. He has to do battle against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, and against wicked spirits in high places. The believer may take it as a settled and fixed principle, that he will be troubled on every side; without there will be fightings, and within there will be fears. If there were no difficulties, no hardships, no trials, and no enemies to be found by the way, there would be no conflict and no need of spiritual armour. But the Christian is a soldier, a wrestler, a fighter, a traveller, and a runner.

I shall now speak of the Preparation necessary for the Journey. "Thy shoes, or under thy shoes, shall be iron and brass." I hardly need say that for a long and trying journey it is necessary to be well prepared. The Lord commanded Israel, saying, "go in and possess the land." Some things are indispensably necessary in being well prepared for a journey. Food and clothing are amongst the necessary things. A person grows hungry and thirsty on his way. He must have bread to satisfy his hunger, and water to quench his thirst. Literally, the Lord supplied Israel in the wilderness with bread and water. And so it is now, the Lord supplies His people with spiritual meat and drink, as much as they need for their journey. But He clothes His pilgrims also "with raiment which waxes not old." What raiment can this be, save and except the beautiful white robe of Christ's righteousness. This raiment never waxes old. It never decays. It can never be rent or moth eaten.

The pilgrim must have the whole Christian armour on for he will need it. Let him take the whole armour of

God, that he may be able to stand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. He must have the girdle of truth, which is Christ, about his loins. He must have his heart well protected with the breastplate of righteousness, which is Christ. He must have his feet well shod with the preparation of the Gospel of Peace, the substance of which, is Christ. He must have the shield of faith, or the Lord, the shield, which true faith lays hold of, and with which the fiery darts of Satan are quenched. The head is to be protected with the helmet of salvation, which is Christ. And no person can travel by this way without his sword, the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. The Christian need be skilful in sword exercise. By which I mean, he need be thoroughly acquainted with the Word of God and know how to use it skilfully when he is attacked by the enemy. This seems to be spoken of a warrior rather than of a traveller. Now, as a traveller, the Christian must have good shoes. Some professors are determined to make their own shoes, and these shoes we call the shoes of Mr. Legality. "The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself: God, I thank thee that I am not as other men are." What conceit! What arrogance!! Who had appointed him the King's shoemaker? Who, indeed? Zion's pilgrims must have Gospel shoes. They must be shod with the preparation of the Gospel of Peace. You will remember how the prodigal was treated when he returned to his Father. The best robe was put upon him to clothe him withal. A ring was put upon his hand as a token of union and friendship. And shoes upon his feet to fit him for the journey. (Luke xv. 22.) Here you have acceptance in Christ, union to Christ, and walking with Christ. But Asher's shoes were to be "iron and brass." The reason why they are said to be of iron and brass is this, because these metals are *solid*, *hard*, and *durable*. So are the pilgrim's shoes, which are made of the Gospel of Peace. They are made of solid truth, compacted together by the Spirit of God; and like these metals, these Gospel shoes are solid, durable, and will never wear out.

Good shoes are necessary for the pilgrim because of the roughness of the way. We read that Israel had to pass through that great and terrible wilderness, wherein were "fiery serpents and scorpions." (Deut. viii. 15.) How significant of Satan and his brood. The promise runs thus: "Thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder; the young lion and the dragon shalt thou trample under feet." (Psalm xci. 13.) This is, in the first place, pre-eminently true of Christ and His conquest over Satan and his confederates. But it is also true of the disciples of the Lord. Let us see how this is established from the New Testament. What did our Lord say to the seventy (Luke x.): "Behold, I give you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you." Now, to tread upon, and to tread down spiritual serpents and scorpions, strong and durable spiritual Gospel shoes are an absolute necessity. And when they had done all this, they were not to glory in the fact, as there was something still better for them to glory in—"Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you." This shews that our Lord spoke of spiritual serpents and scorpions. Well, but what is the best thing to glory in:—"But rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven." This is real ground of joying, rejoicing, and glorying, because your names are written in the Lamb's book of life from the foundation of the world. God has engaged Himself on the side of His own people: hence they can say, "Through God we shall do valiantly, for He it is that shall tread down our enemies." "The God of peace shall bruise Satan under our feet shortly."

Now for the Promise:—"As thy days, thy strength shall be." Where is the pilgrim's strength? It is not in his own arm, nor in the arm of any creature. His strength is in the Lord. It is in Jehovah Jesus. It is laid up in Him, and it is also wrought out by Him. "Oh how great is Thy goodness, which Thou hast laid up for them that fear Thee." (Psalm xxxi. 19.) Here is goodness laid up in Christ, as water is laid up in the

fountain. But for whom? "Them that fear Thee." These are the living children of God. "Which Thou hast wrought for them that trust in Thee before the sons of men." This points to Christ's work on the cross, and what He accomplished there. We have help from Him as the fountain and source of all our strength, and we have victory over every foe by the cross work of our Lord Jesus Christ. Our help is in the Name of the Lord Who made heaven and earth. Jehovah Father has laid help upon Jehovah Jesus. Though in ourselves we are weak, yet in Him we are strong. We can do and endure all things through Christ Who strengtheneth us.

"*As thy days.*" The days of the pilgrim may be many or they may be few as regards his life upon earth, but varying days of a spiritual sort he will have to experience. There is the *day of God's power* in the regeneration of a sinner, which is the day of the new birth. (Psalm cx. 3.) There is the *day of small things* (Zech. iv. 10), which is the day of little faith, little love, little joy, little peace, and little hope. Well, despise not the day of small things, for these little pilgrims shall rejoice by-and-bye in the day of great things. But they shall have a *day of evil and trial*. And why? That their faith may be proved to be of the right sort. Those Christians to whom St. Peter wrote, rejoiced that they were kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, yet they had their *season* of heaviness. "Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be." And there is a "need be" for every trial, trouble, affliction, fear, and doubt. "Ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations." The design of these temptations is expressed in the following words: "That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire"—the fire of affliction and persecution—"might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ." (1 Peter ii. 6—8.) The Prophet Joel (ii. 2) speaks of "A day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness, as the morning spread

upon the mountains." This is the *day of trouble* to the Christian. And what course is he to take now? "Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of His servant, that walketh in darkness and hath no light? Let him trust in the Name of the Lord, and stay upon his God." (Isaiah l. 10.) What does the Lord say to him when he is in trouble and distress of soul: "Call upon ME in the day of trouble; I will deliver thee and thou shalt glorify ME." (Psalm l. 15.) The believer in Jesus has his day of prosperity and gladness, as surely as he has his day of adversity. Hear what David has to say about this:—"And in my prosperity I said, I shall never be moved. Lord, by Thy favour, Thou hast made my mountain to stand strong." Then in the same breath, he says, "Thou didst hide Thy face, and I was troubled." (Psalm xxx. 6—7.) Is not this the very experience of God's children now. A night and a day—a day and a night. These are the alternations of a believer's life. Some of my younger brethren may not yet have had many dark and trying days. They will come in due time, you cannot escape them. As verily as you are pilgrims, you will have your day and your night. I would not discourage you, but rather cheer you. The seasons may change in your experience, but Jehovah Jesus is always the same. Let me now say a word or two about the *day of persecution*. "All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." To suffer persecution for righteousness sake was esteemed a blessing by our Lord: "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness sake; for their's is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for MY sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven, for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you." (Mat. v.) You see, that the day of persecution has its reward. Well, but the *day of death* comes when we shall be brought into contact with the last enemy. What then? The Lord has said that HE will be with

HIS people then. "I will be with thee. Fear not." We have the promise, "that at evening time it shall be light." (Zech. xiv.) O God grant it, for Christ's sake. The *day of Resurrection*, the *day of glory*, and the *day of blessedness* draw near. There is also another day I must mention, it is the *day of judgment*. We must appear before the judgment seat of Christ. What then?

"Bold shall I stand in that great day,
For who ought to my charge shall lay?"

Blessed Jesus.—

"When I soar to worlds unknown,
See THEE on THY judgment throne,—
Rock of ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in THEE."

"As thy days, so shall thy strength be."

Strength is promised for thy days. Take one or two passages in confirmation of the promise. "The righteous shall hold on his way, and he that hath clean hands shall be stronger and stronger." The righteous, these are they who go from strength to strength until every one of them appears before God in Zion. There is no failure about their arriving safely at their journey's end. The LORD has spoken good concerning Israel. HE will give Israel both the kingdom and the glory. Who or what shall separate believers from the love of Christ? Shall the day of tribulation; or the day of distress, or the day of persecution, or the day of famine, or the day of nakedness, or the day of peril, or the day of the sword? They may be killed all the day long, and reckoned as sheep for the slaughter for the sake of Christ. Yet, in all these days they are more than conquerors through Him Who loved them. Hence, St. Paul could say, "For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus." "Thy shoes shall be iron and brass; and as thy days, so shall thy strength be."

1. " Afflicted saint to Christ draw near ;
Thy Saviour's gracious promise hear :
His faithful Word declares to thee,
That as thy days, thy strength shall be.
2. " Let not thy heart desponding say,
' How shall I stand the trying day ? '
He has engaged by firm decree
That as thy days, thy strength shall be.
3. " Thy faith is weak, thy foes are strong ;
And if the conflict should be long,
Thy Lord will make the tempter flee,
For as thy days thy strength shall be.
4. " Should persecution rage and flame,
Still trust in thy Redeemer's name :
In fiery trials thou shalt see,
That as thy days, thy strength shall be.
5. " When call'd by Him to bear the cross,
Reproach, affliction, pain, or loss,
Or deep distress and poverty,
Still, as thy days, thy strength shall be.
6. " When death at length appears in view,
Christ's presence shall thy fear subdue :
He comes to set thy spirit free ;
And as thy days, thy strength shall be."

“A LITTLE LEAVEN LEAVENETH THE WHOLE LUMP.”

A SERMON

PREACHED BY THE

Rev. J. BATTERSBY

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AT VERULAM MISSION CHURCH, KENNINGTON ROAD,

LAMBETH, LONDON,

THURSDAY EVENING, JUNE 2ND, 1881.

*In the 5th Chapter of St. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians
and at the 9th verse you will read the following proverb:—*
“A LITTLE LEAVEN LEAVENETH THE WHOLE LUMP.”

Some time ago I preached a Sermon upon our Lord's parable of “*The Leaven*,” as recorded in the 13th chapter of St. Matthew's Gospel. In consequence of the exposition which I then gave you of the parable, I have received many letters from Readers of my printed Sermon, some expressing themselves as agreeing, and others as disagreeing with my interpretation. I have not had time to acknowledge all the letters which have come to hand, nor yet have I had the disposition to enter into a paper correspondence upon the subject of my former Discourse. When I have prepared and preached a Sermon, and revised the rough proof of it, I wish to have done with it, and then to take up another

Scriptural subject which will tend to increase the knowledge of my hearers.

I propose on the present occasion to preach a Supplementary Sermon to the one on "THE LEAVEN WHICH A WOMAN TOOK." I do not intend it to be of a *controversial* nature, but rather to expound certain passages of Scripture, which are intended to illustrate and confirm the views already propounded by me. If any friend differs from me in the interpretation of a passage of Scripture he is at perfect liberty to do so, as far as I am concerned. I make no pretensions to infallibility. I am no Pope amongst you, nor do I wish to be. I give you such expositions of The Scriptures as commend themselves to my own mind, and which I believe to be honestly consistent with the Spirit's teaching.

Before proceeding with the subject of the evening I must give you some idea of my former Sermon upon the parable of the "leaven." I opened it by reviewing the 13th chapter of St. Matthew's Gospel as a chapter of parables. I gave you the definitions of a parable, which have been given and generally accepted by the best of parabolic Interpreters. I explained to you first the Scriptural meaning of "the kingdom of heaven"—and secondly the comparison or similitude:—"The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened." The kingdom of heaven, is the kingdom of the Messiah which is comprehensive of the Professing Christian Church during the Gospel Dispensation. That the parables are intended to give us *different phases* of this *varying* Professing Christian Church. I also pointed out the *difference* between "the kingdom of heaven," or Professing Christian Church in its *mixed* and in its *unmixed* state. That certain parables illustrate the *mixed*, and others the *unmixed state* of the Professing Church or Kingdom. I gave you a *summary* of the views of those who interpret the "leaven" in a *good sense*. I then shewed you that "leaven" is generally, if not univer-

sally, used in a *bad sense* in the Scriptures, and that "leaven" in the parables ought not to be taken as an exception. I then spoke of the "*woman*," and after proving to you, that this term is applied both to the *true* and also to the *apostate* Church, I concluded that the parable of "the leaven" described the Professing Christian Church in her *apostacy*. The "*woman*" is the Apostate Church, the "leaven" is false doctrine, "the three measures of meal" represent the Gospel as coming from the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and the woman hiding the leaven in the meal, is the secret and subtle way of insinuating her false doctrine into the truths of the Gospel, until the whole becomes leavened. The corrupted state of the Professing Christian Church at the present day, I regarded as a manifest proof and confirmation of the view which I had given you of the parable.

There are some persons who contend earnestly that the "*woman*" in the parable means Christ. They do so, because sometimes "*feminine*" words are employed in the Scriptures in describing Him. I have dealt with this subject in my Sermon—"I WILL DRAW ALL UNTO ME," and hence, I shall not dwell upon it now. I find that the term "*woman*" is often used *literally* in the Word of God. This I need not prove to you. (Gen. ii. 21, 22). It is also used *figuratively* for weak and timid rulers (Isa. iii. 12); for the true Church of God (Rev. xii. 1); and for a carnal, cruel, and Apostate Church (Rev. ii. 20, and Rev. xvii. 1—6). But I believe it is never used of Christ throughout the entire Scriptures. I have searched for this use of the word, but I have searched in vain. Truly Christ was "crucified through weakness" (2 Cor. xiii. 4), yet, we are never told, that the weakness of Christ is represented under the figure of a "*woman*." If I be wrong, I shall have to wait for more light upon this point. I incline to the opinion that the parable of the "leaven" is an unfolding of the 5th of Zechariah, the 7th and 8th verses. "And this is a woman that sitteth in the midst of the Ephah. And he said, This is wickedness. And

he cast it into the midst of the Ephah." Compare the points together. "Leaven" and "wickedness." "A woman" and "a woman." "The Ephah," "a measure," "three seah," and "three measures of meal." There may be some disparity in the comparison, but as a whole it is very striking, and on this account I throw it out for your thoughtful consideration. I shall now proceed with our subject :—

The first fact which we shall notice is this, that leaven is both forbidden and commanded under the Mosaic Dispensation ; Secondly, that leaven in the New Testament denotes that which is corrupt and corrupting in doctrine, in politics, in ceremonial, and in conduct : and Thirdly, we shall support and confirm our view of the leaven by Prophecy, by Parable, and by Proof. Here we have a large field before us, and may the Holy Ghost help us to survey it aright for Christ's sake.

First then, leaven was both forbidden and commanded under the Mosaic Dispensation. Why was this? What is the explanation of the fact? Well, it is a fact that leaven was strictly forbidden on pain of excommunication, or death. It was forbidden during the feast of passover. "Seven days shall ye eat unleaven bread ; even the first day ye shall put away leaven out of your houses : for whosoever eateth leavened bread from the first day until the seventh day, that soul shall be cut off from Israel." "Whether he be a stranger or born in the land." "Ye shall eat nothing leavened." "Leavened bread shall not be seen in all your quarters." (Exodus xii. 15, 18, 20 ; xiii. 3, 7 ; Deu. xvi. 4). Why, we ask, was leaven forbidden at this feast? Is it sufficient to say "because the people took their dough before it was leavened" when they came up out of the land of Egypt? I think not. What answer then shall we give? Well, "It was the Lord's Passover." And "the sacrifice of the Lord's Passover" was not to be represented by *corruption*, nor by that which is of a *fermenting, tainting, and corrupting nature*. Christ was to be set forth by that which was *pure and good*. Christ crucified is the substance of the Passover, so we

gather from what St. Paul says:—"Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us." The leaven represented that which was evil, whilst the unleavened bread represented that which was good. Leaven was not even to be seen in the Lord's Passover neither is it to be seen in the Lord Jesus Christ, nor yet in his Gospel, nor in the grace of his Gospel. Again, leaven was forbidden to be offered in any of the sacrifices of the altar. "Thou shalt not offer the blood of my sacrifice with leavened bread." (Exodus xxiii. 18; xxxiv. 25). "No meat offering, which he shall bring unto the Lord, shall be made with leaven: for he shall burn no leaven, nor any honey, in any offering of the Lord made by fire." (Lev. ii. 11). The offerings made by fire, or *fire-offerings*, as they are often called, were *six* in number. The *burnt-offering*, the *meat-offering*, the *peace-offering*, the *sin-offering*, the *trespass-offering*, and the offering of *consecration* of a priest. These fire-offerings represented Christ in *type* and *figure*. I shall try to show you this from the Scriptures. The BURNT-OFFERING was taken either from the herd, or from the flocks, or from the fowls according to a person's ability. (Lev. i.) It must be offered voluntarily, without blemish, for an atonement, to be wholly consumed on the altar, and of a sweet savour unto the Lord. This was a type of the one perfect offering of the body of Jesus Christ once and for ever. Christ, through the eternal Spirit, offered Himself without spot to God. There was no corrupt leaven either in the type or antitype. Both in their nature were perfect. THE MEAT-OFFERING comes next in order. The particulars of this offering are described in the 2nd of Leviticus. It was made of fine flour with oil and frankincense, and a memorial of it was burnt upon the altar, an offering made by fire of a sweet savour unto the Lord. The Meat-Offering seems to me to represent Christ in His life as "the bread of God." (Lev. xxi. 6). A part of it was offered upon the altar unto the Lord, and the remnant belonged to Aaron and his sons as a thing most holy. God and man fed upon the Meat-offering and were satisfied.

But no Meat-Offering was made with leaven, for leaven is a corrupting thing, and Christ cannot be represented by corruption. The PEACE-OFFERING brings Christ before us as the Great Peace Maker. (Lev. iii). God and the sinner are reconciled and brought into friendship by the one Peace-Offering of Christ. He is our Peace. He has reconciled Jew and Gentile unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby. (Eph. ii. 14—16). There was no tainting leaven in the Peace-Offering, neither was there any taint of sin and corruption in Christ. We may now venture to take the SIN-OFFERING and TRESPASS-OFFERING together as they very much resemble each other. (Lev. iv.—v.). They bring Christ before us as the Sin Bearer. He is the One Sacrifice not only for original guilt, but for the actual transgressions of men. Christ was made to be sin or a Sin Offering for His people, that they might become the righteousness of God in Him. (2 Cor. v. 21). Christ Himself has borne our sins in his own body on the tree. (1 Peter ii. 24). And he is our *Ashem* or Trespass-Offering, according to Isaiah. (liii. 10). "His soul has been made a Trespass-Offering for sin." But there was no fermenting leaven in any of the Offerings which typified Christ. No! no!! What we have already said of these Offerings is also true of the Offering at the consecration of a priest, with the exception, that the Meat-Offering was not to be eaten, but wholly burnt upon the altar for a sweet savour unto the Lord. (Lev. vii. 20—23). Leaven was not offered in any of the fire offerings for they figured forth the ONE PERFECT OFFERING of CHRIST. The Person in whom there was no sin, neither guile found in His mouth, could not be shadowed forth by corruption. Jehovah Jesus the Holy One of God never saw corruption. Those who wish to see my views upon the *Fire-Offerings* more fully explained will find them in my Sermon.—"PERFECTED FOR EVER."

But leaven was commanded to be used under the Mosaic Dispensation. Is this a fact? and if so, why so? It is

a fact. You will see from the following Scriptures. "He shall offer for his offering *leavened bread* with the sacrifice of thanksgiving of his peace offerings" (Lev. vii. 13). And the two wave loaves, "they shall be baked with *leaven*, they are the first fruits unto the Lord." (Lev. xxiii. 17.) And also in Amos (iv. 5) it is said, "And offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving with *leaven*." I beseech you to notice that leaven was used in the *sacrifice of thanksgiving*, but it was not burnt upon the altar as a sweet savour unto the Lord. The passage in Amos seems to be spoken ironically, and has reference to Israel offering sacrifice to idols at Bethel rather than to the Lord in Jerusalem. I shall throw the two passages together which I have quoted from Leviticus and deal with them as one. Let us now turn to the 23rd chapter and see what is said about the *leaven*. The chapter contains an account of the feasts of the Lord. I only need mention two or three of them—"The feast of the Lord's Passover," and "the feast of Pentecost." The feast of the Lord's Passover brings before us Christ Who is the Lamb of God slain for His people, and Whose sprinkled blood is their security. Now "the sheaf of first fruits which was waved before the Lord and accepted by Him for the children of Israel, represented Christ as the "first fruits of them that slept," and Who now appears in the presence of God for his spiritual Israel. Fifty days after the offering of the "*sheaf* of first fruits" was the feast of Pentecost, when the "two wave loaves," which were "baked with leaven," were offered being "first fruits unto the Lord." (Verses 15 to 22.) On the day of Pentecost, the Holy Ghost descended upon the disciples and manifested "His first fruits" in them. They could say, "We have the first fruits of the Spirit" in ourselves. (Rom. viii. 23). There was no leaven in Christ the "first fruits," nor in the "first fruits" of the Spirit. But we read of other "first fruits": St. James says, "Of His own will begat He us with the Word of truth, that we should be a kind of *first fruits* of His creatures." (i. 18). Here believers are spoken of as

"first fruits." And these are the "first fruits" represented by the "two wave loaves baken with leaven." How aptly are believers thus represented. They are regenerate and have the "first fruits" of the Spirit of God in them, but then corruption remains even in those who are born again. This is the very thing St. Paul felt when he said:—"When I would do good, evil is present with me." This was the *leaven* of the old man—the wretched man—the depraved man—the man of sin which is the believer's trouble as long as he lives upon the earth. Remember these three facts. Christ as the "first fruits" has no leaven in Him. The "first fruits" of the Spirit have no leaven them. Believers, as "first fruits," have leaven or corruption in them. And it is believers who are represented by the two wave loaves baken with leaven. I hope, beloved, you will be able to distinguish between things that differ and thus behold the beauty of the Lord in His Word and Works. Leaven was both forbidden and commanded under the Mosaic Dispensation, and the reason *why* I have given you.

Let us notice, secondly, that leaven in the New Testament denotes that which is corrupt and corrupting in doctrine, in politics, in ceremonial, and in conduct. If I can establish what I have said, by appealing to the New Testament, I think there will not be much left in favour of "leaven" being used in a *good sense* of the blessed Gospel and its glorious effects.

Leaven in the New Testament denotes corrupt doctrine. I appeal to the words of our Lord to His Disciples. He said to them:—"Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the Sadducees." Now what did He mean by these words? We are told, that they were to "beware of the *doctrine* of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees." (Mat. xvi. 6, 12). In St. Luke it reads thus:—"Beware ye of the *leaven* of the Pharisees, which is *hypocrisy*." (xii. 1). Let us notice a few things which come under the head of the *doctrinal leaven* of the Pharisees. It will also include their practice to some extent. You may read what I say in

the 23rd of St. Matthew. They sat in Moses' seat—They said and did not—They bound heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and laid them on men's shoulders, but they would not move them with one of their fingers. They loved to be seen of men and to make great outward show. They wished for greetings in the market and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi. They shut up the Kingdom of heaven against men. They neither went in themselves, nor suffered others to go in. They devoured widows' houses, and for a pretence made long prayers. They compassed sea and land to make a proselyte. They paid tithe of mint and annis and cummin, but they omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith. They appeared outwardly righteous and beautiful, but inwardly they were full of hypocrisy and iniquity. They made the Commandment of God of none effect by their tradition. They taught for doctrines the commandments of men. And as regards the Sadducees, they denied the resurrection, and believed neither in angel nor spirit. (Acts xxiii. 8). Surely, this point must be clear to most minds, that "leaven" is used in the New Testament to denote *corrupt doctrine*, the corrupt doctrine of the Pharisees and Sadducees.

Leaven in the New Testament denotes also corruption in politics. Our Lord told His disciples to "beware of the *leaven* of Herod." (Mark viii. 15). We read of the Herodians several times in the New Testament. They were amongst those who asked our Lord whether it was lawful to give tribute unto Cæsar or not. They thought of catching Him in His politics, but He answered discreetly. (Mat. xxii. 15—22. Mark xii. 13—17). The Pharisees took counsel with the Herodians how they might destroy Jesus. (Mark iii. 6). The Herodians were a political party—They were followers of Herod and not of Christ. They would comply with heathen and idolatrous practices to enhance the interests of Pagan Rome and their own political authority. Many of the Sadducees were found amongst the Herodians. This political party preferred

temporal aggrandizement to spiritual blessing and eternal glory. There are many such politicians at the present day. But it is hardly safe to speak of Scriptural politics in the hearing of some persons. Well, but we prefer Christ to Herod—And we contend earnestly that all wise and good politicians must have their politics rooted, grounded and established in Christianity. All other politics are corruption, the very leaven of Herod.

Again, leaven denotes corruption in ceremonial. “A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.” What does the Apostle mean by the “little leaven” in the text? Some “false brethren” had privily got into the Galatian Church and were teaching false doctrine, and were trying to lead the Galatian Christians into bondage to *Jewish Ceremonial*. The Apostle exposes the conduct of these leaveners. “O FOOLISH Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth.” . . . “Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye made perfect by the flesh?” What have you to do with these “beggarly elements” of Judaism? “If you be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing.” What have you to do with this ceremonial leaven? Circumcision may appear a little thing, but it is the “little leaven” which taints, ferments, corrupts, and “leaveneth the whole lump” of the Professing Christian Church. Beware of the leaven of Ceremonialism. Professing Christians soon become affected and influenced by external exhibitions. Is not Ceremonialism the very curse of the Professing Christian Church in our own day? Is it not the leaven which is leavening the whole lump?

Once more, leaven denotes corruption in conduct. When the Apostle wrote to the Corinthian Church, he exposed the leaven and the leaveners. (I. Cor. v.) There is *fornication* among you, and you are “puffed up.” The leavener, the fornicator, must be cast out of your Church. “Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? Purge out therefore the old leaven”—the old leaven of fornication—the old leaven of malice and wickedness, and keep the feast of the Lord’s

Passover with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. I think, in few words, I have established the great fact, that leaven in the New Testament, denotes that which is corrupt and corrupting in doctrine, in politics, in ceremonial and in conduct. If what I have now advanced be really the truth of God's Word, you will see that there is a perfect agreement between the Old and New Testament in the use of the word "leaven."

"*A little leaven.*" One transgression, the little leaven of Adam's disobedience has tainted and corrupted all his descendants. Break one little link in a chain and you will sunder the chain. "Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in *one point*, he is guilty of all." One dead fly will cause the ointment of the Apothecary to send forth a stinking savour: so doth a *little folly* him that is in reputation for wisdom and honour. One infected sheep will infect a whole flock. A little leaven of false doctrine will leaven a whole Congregation. A little leaven of worldly politics will leaven a Town, a City, a County. A little leaven of Ceremonialism will leaven a Professed Christian Church—And a little leaven of carnal conduct in a Christian will be pleaded as an excuse for the vilest practices by others. The proverb in our text is of very extensive application—"A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump."

I shall in the third place support and confirm our view of the leaven by Prophecy, by Parable, and by Proof. What I mean will appear from what I shall say under the head of each of these three words: PROPHECY—PARABLE—and PROOF.

What is our Lord's *Prophetic* teaching respecting the state of things at the close of this Dispensation? We read in the 24th of St. Matthew's Gospel that He foretold the destruction of the temple: "And as He sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came and asked Him privately, saying, Tell us when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of Thy coming? and of the end of the world?" Here are three questions

put by the disciples to our Lord which he answered. The first has been literally accomplished in the downfall of Jerusalem. The rest will be as literally fulfilled in the Lord's appointed time. Our Lord cautions His disciples, saying, "Take heed that no man deceive you." Why? "For many shall come in My Name saying, I am CHRIST, and shall deceive many." Here, our Lord says, that these false Christs shall succeed. And so shall the false prophets: "And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many." Iniquity is to abound, and the love of many is to wax cold. But if any man should say unto a disciple: "Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not. For there shall arise false Christs and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect." Well, what is to be the state of things when the Lord comes again? Will the world have been converted? Will all who profess the Christian religion be Christians? Alas! Alas!! Let us hear what Jehovah Jesus Himself says about His coming, and about the consummation of the age: "And as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying, and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be. Then shall two be in the field; the one shall he taken, and the other left. Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left." Compare this account with the 17th of St. Luke, and then put the question to yourselves—"When the Son of Man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth?" (Luke xviii. 8). This is a very hard question to answer. Shall there be *then* any pure Gospel? Shall there be *then* any true faith in the Lord Jesus Christ? Shall there be *then* any faithful brethren upon the earth? The question seems to imply that believers will be few in number, and that unbelief, error, and ungodliness will be rampant.

I shall now quote some Apostolic *Prophecies* which bring before us the state of the Professing Christian Church either during or at the close of this Dispensation. St. Paul's words to the Church at Ephesus are these :—" For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them." (Acts xx. 29—30). Of these things the Apostle warned the Ephesians continually. He speaks to the Corinthians of "false Apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the Ministers of Christ." (2 Cor. xi. 13). Now these are the Ministers of Satan and not of Christ. The Apostle often speaks of the *literal coming* of the Lord Jesus Christ in his epistles to the Thessalonians. (1 Thes. iv. 15). But before His coming again literally, he assures them of this fact, that there must be "the falling away first"—THE GREAT APOSTACY which is very fully described in the 2nd Epistle, the 2nd chapter. Again, "This know also that in the *last days* perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God ; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away." (2 Tim. iii. 1—5). Can a person read this Scripture and say that it is not a true picture of our own times? I think not. "Evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived." I shall now refer you to the words of St. John. He says:—"Believe not every spirit, because many false prophets are gone out into the world." "Ye have heard that Antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists." "We know it is the last time." (1 John ii. 18, iv. 1). Antichrist denotes *opposition* to Christ. This describes a pharisaical class of carnal professors. It denotes *substitution*. "This describes popes and priests who sit in

the temple of God, shewing themselves that they are God. It denotes *equality*. This describes those who regard Christ as a mere man, and that He is only like one of themselves. If *Prophecy* has said, there will arise—false Christs, false prophets, false teachers, false brethren, false doctrines, and false practices in the Professing Christian Church during this dispensation, then, I venture to say, that our view of the “leaven” is supported and confirmed by PROPHECY.

It is also supported and confirmed by Parable. I mean that several of the Parables delivered by our Lord teach us that the Professing Christian Church during this Dispensation, and at its close, will be in a *mixed* state—made up of good and bad. I would instance the following Parables: The Parable of the tares; the Parable of the net cast into the sea; the Parable of the ten Virgins; the Parable of the talents; and of Christ’s coming again in judgment upon the Nations when He will divide the sheep from the goats. In the meanwhile the wheat and the tares have to grow together. The Net cast into the sea has to gather of every kind—good and bad. When the Son of Man returns, He will find both wise and foolish virgins in the kingdom, and both profitable and unprofitable servants in the Professing Christian Church. If this be so, then our view of the “leaven” is supported and confirmed by PARABLE.

But our view of the “leaven” is supported and confirmed by Proof. What we mean by PROOF is this, that our view is supported and confirmed by the *evidence of experience*. What is the present state of things? Do not the Romanist and the Ritualist place the Church before the Bible? Does not the Rationalist receive or reject the Bible according to his own *inward light*? Does not the Agnostic decline to believe anything about the “UNKNOWN”? By him, the Bible, as a Revelation is held in abeyance. He may discover some day, that it is true, and then he will both receive it and believe it. These Agnostic Philosophers admit that “by their wisdom they know not God.” (1 Cor. i. 21). But there are

OBJECTORS of all sorts to the Word of God. There is the *Scientific Objector*. But why does he object to the Bible? Well, because he fancies there are some things in the Bible which do not exactly square with his own newly acquired notions of science. Doubtless, such a scientific man as this, in his own mind, far surpasses a Barrow, a Newton, a Locke, a Chalmers, or a Faraday. Then you have the would be *Critical Objector*. And why does he object? Well, he has discovered that there are *various readings* in the Scriptures of certain passages, and he is very anxious to inform everybody that he is acquainted with the fact. It is true that all careful readers of the Bible knew about this sort of criticism before, but now they know that he knows. His critical objections may extend to Names and Dates—and even to other things. Then there is the *Doctrinal Objector*—The objector who denies the Sovereignty of God in the Election of a sinner to Salvation, who denies the Divinity of Christ and His Atonement, who denies the Personality of the Holy Ghost and the Inspiration of the Scriptures. The ignorant, carnal, and worldly Objector, together with a host of others, we shall pass by, because, that which is at the root of their objection is evidently condemned by that Word to which they object. If what I have now said be *practically* and *experimentally* true, then you have *evidence* amounting to PROOF that our view of the “heaven” is supported and confirmed by PROOF. Think of our argument by PROPHECY, by PARABLE, and by PROOF.

In conclusion, I fancy an objector may say:—“Why then preach the Gospel to the people? Why be so anxious about sending Missionaries to the Heathen? If things in the Professing Church are to get worse, and if all the world is not to be converted, why not let them alone in their ignorance? for they are very happy and contented as they are.” My answer is threefold, but very simple, though it may not be satisfactory to such an Objector. The King’s command is sufficient for a King’s Son:—“Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to the whole creation. He that believeth and

is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned." Here are the royal orders of the Great King Himself. And who dares to disobey Him? Again, the Gospel has to be preached unto all nations for a *Witness*.—"And this Gospel of the Kingdom shall be preached in all the World for a *Witness* unto all the Nations; and then shall the end come." Our Lord said to His Disciples just before He ascended:—"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be *Witnesses* unto Me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judæa, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." They were to preach in the Name of Christ among all Nations repentance and remission of sins, beginning at Jerusalem. And this they did as the sent *Witnesses* of Jesus. And again, the Gospel is to be preached among all nations, not because every one will believe it and be saved. The preaching of the Gospel has not converted the whole world, and it never will. But will the preaching of the Gospel be a failure? No! No!! Not so! The Gospel has to be preached among all nations, because God will visit them, "to take out of them a *people* for His Name." It is in the preaching of the Gospel as it is accompanied by the power of the Holy Ghost, the Father has determined to accomplish His purpose of Grace which he purposed in Christ Jesus before the world began—"A people for His Name." What people? A people beloved of the Father and given by Him to the Son. "Thine they were and Thou gavest them Me." "I have laid down My Life for them and I have redeemed them from all evil." Publish the glad tidings among all nations. "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." Let the great Gospel trumpet be blown, and let its sound be heard to the uttermost parts of the earth, that the elect of God may be gathered together to Jesus from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other." "Then shall the earth yield her increase; and God, even our own God, shall bless us. God shall bless us; and all the ends of the earth shall fear Him." Amen! and Amen!!

“THE RIVER OF GOD.”

A SERMON

PREACHED BY THE

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AT VERULAM MISSION CHURCH, KENNINGTON ROAD,

LAMBETH, LONDON,

THURSDAY EVENING, JULY 7TH, 1881.

IN THE 65TH PSALM AND AT THE 9TH VERSE YOU WILL READ:—“THE RIVER OF GOD IS FULL OF WATER.”

I have read my text as it is in the Prayer Book Version. The sense is the same in both translations. The Psalm in which our text occurs was most probably written by him whose name it bears, and is one of the many songs of praise and thanksgiving composed by the sweet Psalmist of Israel. God is honoured, praised, and blessed for His providential care and goodness in causing the earth to yield her increase in due season. I think there is much spiritual truth in this Psalm. What I mean is this:—That the spiritual and eternal blessings of the Gospel are shadowed forth by the temporal and providential blessings of the earth. I hope to be able to show you this to some extent under the following heads:—

In the first place, I shall give you a running exposition of the Psalm in general; and in the second place, I shall endeavour to open out the text in particular. “The River of God is full of Water.” To obtain a clear spiritual exposition of God’s Word, it is indispensably necessary

that we be spiritually guided by Him Who is the infallible Spirit of truth. May it please God to grant both to the preacher and to the hearer His own Divine presence, blessing, and guidance this evening for Jesus Christ's sake.

In the first place, I shall give you a running exposition of the Psalm in general. I shall notice each verse and point out to you some spiritual truth as contained under the phraseology used by the sacred Writer. In the 1st verse you have literal Sion as the place where Jehovah dwelt, and where He manifested forth His glorious presence. But then we have Spiritual Sion, or Mount Sion, which is the Church of the living God. (Heb. xii. 22). This is the city of the great King Jehovah Jesus. He has chosen her for Himself and made her His rest and dwelling place for ever. It is in this Mount Sion praise rests, waits, and is due to the Lord. It is in this heavenly Jerusalem that the vow of thanksgiving shall be performed for His Goodness. "Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised in the City of our God, in the Mountain of His holiness. Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is Mount Sion, on the sides of the north, the City of the great King. God is known in her palaces for a Refuge." (Psalm 48th).

In the 2nd verse, God is the Hearer of Prayer. "*O thou that hearest Prayer.*" All true prayer is addressed to God through Jesus Christ our Lord. The Mover and Inditer thereof is the Holy Ghost. He draws our petitions *for* us and *in* us according to the revealed will of God. Real spiritual prayer breaks forth from the heart when there is a *felt sense* of need. It is then that we make known our requests to God. "*Unto thee shall all flesh come.*" What is meant by *flesh* here? I take it as meaning all sorts of sensible sinners throughout the world, whether they be Jews or Gentiles. These persons come to God in faith and prayer through Christ the new and living way, being effectually taught and drawn by the Holy Spirit. They *shall* come, and coming they shall be saved with an everlasting and

complete Salvation. But then they feel their sins and their iniquities like the Psalmist in the 3rd verse—*"Iniquities prevail against me."* Their own iniquities and the iniquities of others are so mighty and so powerful against them that they cannot put them away; and if they cannot, who can? *"As for our transgressions, Thou shalt purge them away."* This points to the Blood of the Son of God which cleanses the sinner from every sin. Through the Blood of Christ we have peace, justification, redemption, nearness to God, and an entrance into heaven itself. Hence, in the 4th verse we read:—*"Blessed is the man Whom Thou choosest and causest to approach unto Thee, that he may dwell in Thy courts."* What Man can this be Who is so blessed of God? Well, it is the Man of God's choice. I am inclined to look upon this Man as the Man Christ Jesus, the Man of God's right hand—The Man Whom He has made strong for Himself. He has laid help upon One that is mighty—He has exalted One chosen out of the people, even Jesus. This is the Man in Whom the people of God have been eternally blessed with every spiritual blessing. This is the Man Whom the Father has caused to approach unto Him on behalf of His people. And this is the Man Who has engaged His heart so to do. (Jer. xxx. 21). This Man now dwells in the courts of heaven as the Mediator, Representative, and Advocate of His Blood bought throng. All believers are in union with this Man, and are blessed in Him. They are blessed because their transgressions are forgiven, and their sins are covered. They are blessed because iniquity shall not be reckoned to them. They are blessed with the fruits of the Spirit, and with a good hope through grace of a bright and glorious eternity. They may well say:—*"We shall be satisfied with the goodness of Thy house, even of Thy holy temple."* This is the church of God, the household of faith, the temple of the Holy Ghost. (Eph. ii. 19—22). The goodness of this house is the spiritual provision which God has provided for His people. In this house Christ is the bread of life, and the Spirit is the water of life.

In this house there is an unfailing supply of spiritual food. All hungering and thirsting souls shall eat and drink and be satisfied with the fatness of Jehovah's house. Are we not reminded of the words of David in another of his precious Psalms? "As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after Thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God." (Psm. xlii.) May our souls be filled with spiritual hungering and thirsting for the living God in Christ Jesus, for all such souls shall be satisfied with the goodness of Jehovah's house: "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled."

In the 5th verse we have the Lord described as answering His people—"By terrible things in righteousness wilt Thou answer us, O God of our salvation." What are the *terrible things*? They appear to me to be the judgments of God poured out upon the enemies of the Lord's children. God destroyed the old world in the time of Noah. And in the days of Lot He turned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha into ashes, condemning them with an overthrow (2 Peter ii. 5-6). And at the Red sea He drowned the Egyptians, but caused His own people to pass through in safety. How terrible is God in His works! through the greatness of His power shall His enemies submit themselves unto Him. His terrible and wonderful works are rehearsed in the 136th Psalm, to which I refer you. In the latter day anti-christ shall perish with a terrible overthrow. "So let all Thine enemies perish, O Lord; but let them that love Him be as the sun when He goeth forth in His might." (Judges v. 31). Now, whatever the Lord does, is "in righteousness," faithfulness and truth. He saves in righteousness and condemns in righteousness. "*O God of our salvation.*" Such are the words of those who are blood-bought and Spirit-taught. They claim God as the Author and Finisher of their salvation. It makes no difference where they may be whether on the earth or on the sea, they know and confess that Jehovah is "the confidence of all the ends of the earth, and of

them that are afar off upon the sea." The God of our salvation goes before us, He is round about us, He is our rearguard, and He is the glory in the midst of us. Our God has "*by His strength set fast the mountains; being girded with power.*" Literally this is so. Now these mountains are spiritually the mountains of Jehovah's purpose and grace, which can never be removed. God has girded himself with strength, that these everlasting mountains of His purpose may stand fast for ever. The Lord's house, the Church of God, is established in the top of these mountains. The spiritually taught children of God go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob, that they may learn His ways and walk in His paths. (Isa. ii. 2-5).

In the 7th verse there are several figurative expressions which describe the wicked as being like the raging waves of the sea, but which God stills with a word. "*He stilleth the noise of the seas, the noise of their waves, and the tumult or madness of the people.*" What can the wicked do when the Lord sits in the heavens? He shall laugh them to scorn: He shall have them in derision. What have the children of God to fear when the Lord Himself is on their side? The proud waves of the wicked may toss themselves, yet they cannot prevail; yea, they may roar, yet they cannot pass over and destroy the Church of God. Men are made to tremble throughout the world when God arises in judgment upon the wicked, and when He defends His own in loving-kindness and tender mercy. "*They also that dwell in the uttermost parts are afraid at Thy tokens.*" What tokens or signs? Tokens in the heavens! tokens in the earth! and tokens in the Church! He only doeth wonders. These signs and tokens may be given either in mercy or in judgment. The wicked tremble at the sight of them.

"*Thou makest the outgoings of the morning and of the evening to rejoice.*" This may be taken literally of all nature, but I prefer looking at it in a Gospel light. When the Sun of righteousness arises with healing in His wings upon the new-born soul, then it is, the out-

goings of the morning praise the Lord. And when the evening of life draws on and the child of God is about to enter his eternal home, it is with shoutings of joy:—"Grace, grace, unto it." The Christian may have many a dark and sorrowful day between his morning and his evening, still the promise abides for ever true: "The Lord makes the outgoings of the morning and the evening to rejoice."

Now for the 9th and following verses to the end of the Psalm. We have God visiting the earth, caring for it, watering it, and richly providing corn for the inhabitants thereof. We may take this literally, but there is underlying the whole, deep spiritual truth. God has visited the earth in the Person of Jesus Christ:—"Blessed be the Lord God of Israel for He hath visited and redeemed His people." He has watered them also with the River of His love, sending His Holy Spirit into their hearts, enriching them with the riches of His grace. He has prepared and provided for them corn from heaven. This is the wheat of the Gospel. "Thou visitest the earth and waterest it: Thou greatly enrichest it with the River of God, which is full of water: Thou preparest them corn, when Thou hast so provided for it." In the 10th verse we read that the ridges thereof are watered abundantly. The ridges of pride, self exaltation and conceit, are brought down by the water of God's grace. There is nothing like it for softening and humbling lofty souls. And when they are humbled He fills them with the abundance of His grace. God sends showers of heavenly rain to soften the hearts of His people and to keep them so. God blesses the seed sown in the heart, and causes it to take root, to spring up, and to bring forth fruit to perfection. Grace begins, carries on, and completes God's own work in the soul. O God, "Thou waterest the ridges abundantly: Thou settlest the furrows thereof: Thou makest it soft with showers: Thou blessest the springing thereof." This leads us on to the words of the 11th verse:—Jehovah crowns the year of His grace with a rich harvest. The seed of God's word is sown in the heart, it is watered

by Divine grace, it springs up, bears fruit, and in due season it is gathered into the granary of heaven. God crowns the believer's year with an abundant entrance into the Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. This is the crown of God's goodness. The Lord's "paths drop fatness" upon the souls of His servants. He bestows upon them "showers of blessing." "They drop upon the pastures of the wilderness," that is upon the Gentile world, and many of them are made to rejoice in the Gospel of the grace of God. There are those among us who think that we are Israelites, and hence call us Anglo-Israelites. Now, if we be true spiritual Israelites in Christ Jesus, we need not trouble ourselves about our carnal descent. "And the *little hills* rejoice on every side." And what are these "*little hills*," but the various congregations of the people of God scattered throughout the world? These are they who worship God in the Spirit, who rejoice in Christ Jesus, and who have no confidence in the flesh. The Gentile "pastures are clothed with these flocks." In the aggregate it is but one beautiful flock for which the Saviour laid down His life, and which the Ministers of God are to tend and feed. "Feed the flock of God which is among you." Sometimes this flock has to be fed upon the mountains of Israel by the rivers of waters. And sometimes in "the valleys which are covered over with corn." The children of God are often in the valleys, but it is not a bad thing for them after all. And why? because there is plenty of corn in the valleys to meet all their spiritual needs. The inhabitants of the valleys and of the hills "shout and sing for joy." This Psalm begins and ends with praise and thanksgiving. We have now run hastily through the Psalm. Perhaps some of you may be saying, "Well, we could have gone through it ourselves. We could have expounded it at home," and so on. Be it so; I hope, however, it will do us no harm to have gone through it together, and after this familiar manner. Let us now bless our Covenant God for the many spiritual songs of praise and thanksgiving with which he has favoured us in His

Word. Let our Words be those of His royal servant: "I will extol Thee, my God, O King; and I will bless Thy Name for ever and ever. Every day will I bless Thee, and I will praise Thy Name for ever and ever."

I shall now proceed, in the second place, to open out the text in particular.—"The River of God is full of Water." I need hardly say to you that we have here figurative language. It is called a "River." "The River of God's pleasures." "A River which cannot be passed over." "A pure River of Water of life." "The River of God." "The glorious Lord Himself is a place of broad Rivers and Streams." It seems to me that these Scriptural expressions are intended to convey one and the same Gospel truth. By the "River of God," many understand the everlasting love of God, or the Gospel of the Grace of God, or the Spirit of God in his gracious operations. I see no reason why we should not look upon the River of God as God's eternal covenant of love and grace. This definition will be sufficiently comprehensive and will include all that we desire to say upon the subject.

Now every River has its *source* or *head*, so has the "River of God." The text itself informs us that God Himself is the *source* or *head* of this River. Ezekiel says, that the waters of this River "issue out from under the threshold of the house, and on the right side of the sanctuary." (xlvi.) Zechariah says, that these "living waters go out from Jerusalem," (xiv. 8). St. John says, that he saw "A pure River of Water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb." (Rev. xxii. 1). Let it be clearly understood that when I speak of God as the *source* or *head* of the River of love and grace, I mean the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are all engaged in the Covenant of Grace for the Salvation of Souls. Hence, God is the God of all Grace. The grace of God brings salvation. The exceeding riches of His Grace have abounded towards us through Christ Jesus our Lord. You know the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for our sakes He became poor, that we

through his poverty might be rich. The Holy Ghost is the Spirit of Grace, the Author and Giver of all spiritual grace and life to us. The Gospel which reveals these blessed truths to us is called the Gospel of the Grace of God. The *source* or *head* of the River of everlasting love and free Grace is God Himself, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. I hope my meaning is as clear to you as it is to myself. We cannot advance a single step in the Salvation of a sinner without the triune preventing Grace of Jehovah.

This is a River with many Streams. "There is a river, the Streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the most High." (Psm. xlv. 4). The City of God and the holy place set forth the Church of God which is the dwelling-place of the most High God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. The River in this verse reminds us of the "River which went out of Eden to water the garden." (Gen. ii. 10). In these few words you have some beautiful spiritual truth. Take the garden as a figure of the Church of God, for the Church is a garden enclosed by Jehovah Himself. The river had its rise in Eden, that is in Paradise, so has the River of love and grace its rise in the Paradise of God. The design of the river was this, that it should water the garden. The design of the River of the love and grace of God is to water the whole Church of God, that every tree of righteousness which our heavenly Father has planted therein may be nourished and so "bring forth his fruit in his season." But what are the *Streams* of this River? Generally speaking, we say that they are the many blessings of the Covenant of Grace. God's choice of His people in Christ Jesus from everlasting, their redemption from all iniquity by the precious blood of the Lamb, and their regeneration and preservation by the Holy Spirit. The *Streams* of love, grace, mercy, peace and joy flow from the fountain of Divine love, and make the hearts of believers glad with God's Salvation. An old servant of God has said, speaking of the Streams which make glad the City of God:—"The Streams which flow from

the river of electing love, are vocation to Christ, justification by Christ, sanctification in Christ, perseverance through Christ, glorification with Christ, and all joy and peace in believing on Christ." (Mason). When the God of hope fills our hearts with joy and peace in believing, then it is, that we abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost. It is when the Holy Ghost does unto us and in us great and marvellous things, that we can rejoice with Mary, saying, "My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour." Come, let us make our boast in the Lord, and let us magnify and exalt His Name together for the reviving streams of that River which gladdens the City of God, the dwelling place of the most High.

Let us now see how Ezekiel speaks of this River. (xlvi.) We have already touched upon the *source* of the River as declared in the 1st verse. "The waters issued out from under the threshold of the house eastward;" and "on the right side of the house." These waters *varied* in *depth* until they became a River that could not be passed over (verse 5). The first measure taken of these was, that they were to the ankles; the second, that they were to the knees; the third, that they were to the loins; and the fourth, that they were waters to swim in, an impassable River. The waters of this River were of a *healing* and *strengthening* nature. How very good for *weak ankles* these waters must have been. David says, "Thou hast enlarged my steps under me, that my feet (*ankles* in the margin) did not slip." (Psm. xviii. 36). Persons with weak ankles are unable to walk very well. You will remember the man who had been lame from his birth, and who was laid daily at the Beautiful gate of the temple to ask an alms of those who passed by, and how he was miraculously cured by Peter, who said:—"In the Name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk. And he took him by the right hand, and lifted him up; and immediately his *feet* and *ankle bones* received strength. And he leaping up stood, and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God."

(Acts iii.) His ankles had been strengthened miraculously, and hence he could walk. When a weak believer has been healed and strengthened in the River of God's grace, then he is able to walk in the way of God's Commandments. The waters are up to the *knees*. Weak knees are a sign of feebleness in prayer. How often this is the case with the children of God. There is no cure for weak knees but a dip in this River. Strengthen "the feeble knees; and make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed." (Heb. xii. 12—13). The grace of God is the healing River. The waters were then up to the *loins*. The loins denote strength or a confirmation of strength. Girding up the loins denotes faithfulness and perseverance in the Gospel of the grace of God. (Luke xii. 35. Eph. vi. 14. 1 Peter i. 13). The heart is established in the truth of God by these waters, or by the River of free Grace. The waters rise and become a River which can neither be bottomed nor crossed. Surely, this is the ocean of God's love as manifested to us in the Person of Jesus Christ. O that "Ye may be able to comprehend with all Saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with the fullness of God." (Eph. iv. 18—19). The River of the love of Christ is broader than the sea of sin and corruption, longer than the earth and all its devices, deep as hell, and high as heaven. Love so amazing, so divine, demands my soul, my life, my all. This River is not only healing, but *life-giving*. Everything lives whither this River cometh. All the fish in this River are alive, and they are exceeding many. This gives us some idea of what it is to be in the Covenant of Grace.

I shall now shew you how St. John describes the River of God:—"And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb." (Rev. xxii. 1.) (1.) The River which he saw is the "*Water of life*." (2.) It is described by its *purity* and *clearness*. And (3) by its *source*.

I have already spoken of the source of this River, and hence I shall not dwell at any length upon this point again. John saw a River of "water of life." Now what are we to understand by the "water of life"? It is a figurative expression intended to convey to us some spiritual truth. I take the "water of life" as setting forth the grace of the Spirit of God. Let me give you two or three Scriptures confirmatory of this view. You read in the 44th of Isaiah: "I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground." These words are then explained in the latter part of the verse: "I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring: And they," the spiritual seed and offspring, "shall spring up as among the grass, as willows by the water courses" (verses 3 and 4). Our Lord described the "water of life" to the woman of Samaria:—"Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." (John iv. 14). Here was living water which could quench the thirst of the soul, and at the same time abide in the heart as an everlasting well-spring of life. This is the living water of which our Lord said:—"If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink. He that believeth on Me, as the Scripture hath said." Some persons put a full stop after the word "said," and make the remaining words our Lord's, and not as if they were a quotation from the Old Testament:—"Out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." This, we are told, was spoken of the Spirit, which they that believe on Jesus should receive. There is a fitness in setting forth the grace of the Spirit of God by living or running water. Running water softens and cleanses, so does the grace of the Spirit. Running water refreshes and revives, so does the grace of the Spirit. Running water fertilizes abundantly, so does the grace of the Spirit. Running water is both fresh and free, so is the grace of the Spirit. Hence, the gracious invitations to the thirsty souls of the poor and needy:—"Ho every one that *thirsteth*, come ye to

the waters"—to these living waters. "Let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely." When we refer to, or quote the Scriptures, we ought always to be most careful in observing the character or the persons to whom they really apply. If we fail to do this, we shall make them speak the veriest nonsense. Observe character always, and then the invitations and promises will be both refreshing and encouraging to the feeble flock of God.

The River of God is a pure River. This word *pure* denotes that which is free from mixture; hence, we speak of "pure gold," "pure oil," "pure frankincense," "pure myrrh," "pure words," and "pure doctrine." You will see, that in all these examples, the word *pure* means unmixed, and unadulterated. The River of God is an unmixed and an unadulterated River. There is nothing injurious or defiling in the River of love and grace. Trace this River from its source to the ocean of eternity, and purity is its natural quality. This River purifies all those who worship God in Spirit and in truth. There is a generation which is pure in its own eyes. But the generation of the spiritual seed of Jesus Christ is pure in the eyes of Jehovah. And why? Because it has been purified in the pure River of the water of eternal life.

The River of God is a clear River.—"Clear as crystal." The idea conveyed to our minds by crystal is that of transparency. The River of the water of life appeared to John as very clear, and very transparent. There was nothing dark in it. On the contrary, it was clear as the sun. It reflected the light of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. Now all who drink of this water of life become clear sighted, and are never satisfied until they see themselves clearly reflected in the crystal River or crystal Sea which is before the throne of God. Transparent as Christ, and why? Because their standing is in Him. Looking into this crystal River or Sea, they are changed from glory to glory by the Spirit of the Lord. Read the verse again, and I hope you will do so with profit:—"And He shewed me

a pure river of water of life clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb."

The River of God is full of water. We have spoken of the quality of the water of life, now we must say a few words about the *quantity*. "*Full of water.*" Here is abundance. Isaiah says, "that in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert, and the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water." (xxxv.) Then shall the lame man leap as the hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing. The River of free grace shall overflow all its banks that the Church of God may be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water whose waters fail not. The water of this River is so plentiful, that sinners of all sorts and sizes may be more than satisfied. The saints of God, the vessels of mercy, vessels of small quantity and vessels of large quantity, from the vessels of cups even to all the vessels of flagons, are equally filled with water from the River of God. There is no fear of this River failing or drying up. The promise is:—"His waters shall be sure." (Isaiah xxxiii. 16). Jehovah gives waters in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert, to give drink to His people, even to His chosen. (Isaiah xliii. 20).

Before concluding the subject of this evening, I wish to make a few practical observations, the first is this:—The River of God *divides* the Church from the world, and heaven from hell. How express our Lord is upon this point when He addresses His disciples:—"I have chosen you out of the world." "Ye are not of the world." The River of electing love and grace has separated you from the world. Our Lord showed His disciples that the River of electing love is a dividing and separating River. "Be ye separate."

The River of God is the *only* River which runs into the *ocean of eternal glory*. If you try to sail to heaven by any other River than that of free grace, you will be wrecked. You will strike upon some sunken rock, or sand bank, which will consummate your ruin. Remember also that the winds are contrary, and there is no

landing, neither could you swim to shore, if you were thrown overboard. On the River of God's love and grace there is nothing to fear. All will be well!

The River of God is the *only* River which affords a *free passage* to heaven. The fare has been paid and the berth has been taken by the Captain of our Salvation. What a blessing! All those who are heavenward bound were unable to pay or to work out their passage. They had no money and therefore could not pay. They had no strength, and therefore could not work—But the Lord has secured them a *free passage* having paid the fare Himself. The passengers are princely seafarers.

The River of God is the *only means* by which *business* is carried on with heaven. What do I mean by *business*, *this heavenly business*? Jesus said He must be about His Father's business. He must work the works of God. Now my business with heaven is spiritual communion and fellowship with the Father through our Lord Jesus Christ. I have to make known my felt wants to my heavenly Father, but I can only do this by means of the River of free grace. All praise to Jehovah Jesus Who keeps the passage open.

The River of God *makes its own way* often *running very crooked, twisting and turning hither and thither* as it passes through the valleys. The way to heaven frequently appears a very roundabout way, but then it is always the right way. As you sail along this River you have beautiful fruit to eat which grows on the tree of life. The hungry soul shall be satisfied with these heavenly fruits. And if you should receive a wound by the way the leaves of the same tree will heal it. Music and singing will be heard upon this River from ten thousand voices. They are filled with the Spirit and speak to each other in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in their hearts to the Lord; giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ. (Eph. v. 18-20).

The River of God often runs *under ground* and *out of sight* for a long time and then suddenly breaks up and

shows itself. The River of electing love runs under ground and out of sight until it breaks up in the heart in *effectual calling*. This River of love and grace broke up in Paul when he was on his way to Damascus. And in Zaccheus when he was in a sycamore tree. And in the Jailor in the prison at Philippi. And in the thief on the cross. And in three thousand in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost. This River breaks down all opposition. There is no River like it. Jehovah makes His people to drink of the River of His pleasures and then they, like the Psalmist, are willing to exclaim:—Our cup, the cup of our joy runneth over!

Now with what words shall we *bless* and *praise* God for the River of His love and grace? David sang when deeply impressed with a sense of God's goodness:—"O God my heart is ready, my heart is ready; I will sing and give praise with the best member that I have." O Lord fill our hearts with the River of Thy love and grace, and open Thou our lips, and then our mouths shall show forth Thy praise:—

"Praise God, from Whom all blessings flow,
Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host,
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost!"

"I WILL CARRY YOU."

A S E R M O N

PREACHED BY THE

Rev. J. BATTERSBY

(*Vicar of St. James', Sheffield*),

AT VERULAM MISSION CHURCH, KENNINGTON ROAD,
LAMBETH, LONDON,

THURSDAY EVENING, AUGUST 4TH, 1881.

*In the 46th Chapter of Isaiah and at the 3rd and 4th verses
you will read:*

"HEARKEN UNTO ME, O HOUSE OF JACOB, AND ALL THE REMNANT OF THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL, WHICH ARE BORNE BY ME FROM THE BELLY, WHICH ARE CARRIED FROM THE WOMB: AND EVEN TO YOUR OLD AGE I AM HE; AND EVEN TO HOAR HAIRS WILL I CARRY YOU: I HAVE MADE, AND I WILL BEAR; EVEN I WILL CARRY, AND WILL DELIVER YOU."

In this Chapter we have the folly of idolatry exposed and the destruction of idols foretold. In the 1st verse, it is said, "Bel boweth down." Bel was the chief domestic god of the Babylonians, and as such he was worshipped by them. But Bel "*boweth down*." This means that he was removed from his place, or fell down and was broken, as Dagon fell down and was broken before the ark of the Lord. (1 Sam. v. 3-4). Nebo was another god of the Chaldeans, and was worshipped by them as the celestial Scribe. He was regarded as Bel's attendant and Scribe. Nebo "*stoopeth*," that is, Nebo

falls down as one who is struck dead in battle. These idols are conquered and conveyed by weary beasts into captivity. "Their idols were upon the beasts, and upon the cattle: your carriages were heavy laden; they are a burden to the weary beast. They stoop, they bow down together; they could not deliver the burden." That is they could not deliver their own charge, or their own worshippers, "but they themselves are gone into captivity." The idolatrous worshippers in Babylon could not save their idols, neither could the idols save their worshippers, but both are carried by the weary beast into captivity. How striking is the contrast between idols and the true God. Read and meditate upon the words of our text. Jehovah has no equal. "To whom will ye liken Me, or make Me equal, and compare Me, that we may be like." The Prophet still further shows and exposes the folly and vanity of idols and idolaters. "They lavish gold out of the bag, and weigh silver in the balance, and hire a goldsmith; and he maketh it a god; they fall down, yea, they worship. They bear him upon the shoulder, they carry him, and set him in his place, and he standeth; from his place shall he not remove: yea, one shall cry unto him, yet can he not answer, nor save him out of his trouble." Now, what is the use of such a god as this? He is the work of men's hands, he is lifeless, he is weak, and he is helpless to save either himself or his worshippers. Idolatry in any shape is a hateful thing and to be abhorred of all those who love and serve the true and living God. The practical exposure of idolatry at Carmel, by Elijah, is unique. (1 Kings xviii.) The emptiness of idols and idolaters is both ridiculed and censured by the Psalmist. (cxv.) The vanity of idol makers is described in detail and to perfection by the Prophet Isaiah. (xliv. 9-20). The Prophets Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and others are unsparing in their condemnation of idols and idolaters. The counsel of St. John to Christians is most wholesome: "Little children keep yourselves from idols."

We shall now proceed with our text, and to this end consider: first, the Speaker; secondly, the persons spoken to;

and thirdly, the tender care and protection shewn by the former to the latter. I hope that under these two or three heads, we shall be able to show you Jehovah's goodness to His people, both temporally, providentially, and spiritually. In tracing the history of God's dealings with His ancient people Israel, these features of His goodness are everywhere most manifest. I think this will appear as we proceed with our subject. May the Holy Ghost help us to open our text Scripturally for Christ's sake.

Consider first the Speaker: "Hearken unto Me." The Speaker is God Himself. I do not intend saying much about the Speaker beyond what He says of Himself in this Chapter. He speaks with *authority* as in the text, and as in the 8th and following verses. "Hearken unto Me," and "Remember this," or these things, which I have spoken respecting idols and their worthlessness. They are empty and vain and can neither hear you nor save you. "Shew yourselves men," and be not carried away by the "dumb idols" of the Babylonians. "Be men and not brutes which neither consider nor understand." "Bring it again to mind, O ye transgressors." Think of and reflect upon the abomination of idols, and consider the Lord your God Who is a Spirit, and Who must be worshipped in spirit and in truth. "Remember the former things of old." Look into the heavens and then at the earth, and at all the things which are therein. Have not Mine hands made all these things? Look at My dealings with your fathers! What nation or people was ever dealt with as I have dealt with them and with you? And why so? "For I am God, and there is none else: I am God, and there is none like Me." I have a fixed and settled purpose respecting everything. I know the end from the beginning. My plan cannot be frustrated. I will do all My pleasure. What does He say in the 10th verse? "Declaring the end from the beginning." Declaring the end of the old world from the beginning, the end of the Mosaic Dispensation from the beginning, the end of the Gospel Dispensation from the beginning, the end of every prophecy from the begin-

ning, and the end of every possible event from the beginning. "And from ancient times the things that are not yet done." Such as God manifest in the flesh, Redemption by Christ, the Resurrection, Regeneration by the Holy Ghost, the gathering together of the Church from Jews and Gentiles, the destruction of antichrist, and the glory that shall follow. All these things and many more must be accomplished at the appointed time. And why? Because God has said, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." God has engaged Himself both by promise and by oath, in order that His counsel shall be immutable and His pleasure fulfilled.

The illustration given is contained in the 11th verse: "Calling a ravenous bird from the East." The *ravenous bird*, is "a swift winged bird," which is very applicable to Cyrus, who was swift and rapid in all his movements. The Lord called Cyrus His anointed whose right hand He held to subdue nations before him. This man was called from the East to execute judgment upon Babylon, and to deliver Israel out of captivity. He was the man who executed Jehovah's counsel from a far country. Cyrus may have been entirely ignorant of the counsel and purpose of God, yet he is the man whom Jehovah raised up to accomplish His will upon the Babylonians. "Yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it." Jehovah had purposed in His own breast that Cyrus should be the deliverer of Israel. He had also spoken it in prophecy (Isa. xlv. 28), and at the hour fixed He brought it to pass. (Ezra. i.) Underlying the whole of this history, we see Jesus the man of Jehovah's counsel coming forth in the fulness of time to accomplish all His Father's will in putting away the sins of His people, and in delivering them from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

The Speaker in our text then addresses the *stubborn, unbelieving, and rebellious* Jews. "Hearken unto Me, ye stouthearted, that are far from righteousness."

They did not believe that God would fulfil His promises but in the last verse He assures them that He will. "I bring near my righteousness, it shall not be far off." I shall fulfil all the promises I have made—I am faithfulness and truth. "And My salvation shall not tarry." The deliverance which I have promised, I shall perform at the time appointed. "And I will place salvation in Zion for Israel My glory." Zion shall be rebuilt, and therein will I shew forth My salvation to Israel My chosen, My redeemed, and My excellency. Here we have glorious Gospel truth. Jehovah's Righteousness is Christ, the Lord our Righteousness. This Righteousness is brought near in the Gospel and by the Holy Ghost. This is the Salvation also which does not tarry, and which is placed in Zion for Israel the glory of Jehovah. The Israel of God becomes glorious in the glory of Jesus. The Church of Christ is comely, beautiful, and perfect through the comeliness, beauty, perfection, and glory, which the Lord Himself puts upon her.

We might here enlarge much upon the Speaker in the text. I think, however, this is unnecessary, as you will have gathered from what has already been said, that the God of Israel is not like the gods of the Heathen. Israel's God is a *Powerful* God, for He has made, raised up, carried, and delivered them in the past. Israel's God is an *unchangeable* God, from infancy to hoar hairs "I am He." He is always the same. Israel's God is a *faithful* God, for whatever He has promised that will He perform. Israel's God is *righteous* in all His ways, and *holy* in all His works. Israel's God says "Hearken unto Me."—I am Jehovah, God of gods, Lord of lords, and King of kings.

This brings us in the second place to consider the persons addressed: "O house of Jacob, and all the remnant of the house of Israel." There is no reason why these words may not be taken literally of the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, who were now in captivity and bondage. God's providential dealings with them in their infancy, youth, manhood, and old age is

wonderful. Their *infancy* is thus described: "Look unto the rock whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged. Look unto Abraham your father, and unto Sarah, that bear you." (Isa. li. 1, 2.) We may take a passage from the 16th of Ezekiel which will throw some light upon this point. "Thus saith the Lord God unto Jerusalem; Thy birth and thy nativity is of the land of Canaan; thy father was an Amorite, and thy mother an Hittite. And as for thy nativity, in the day that thou wast born thy naval was not cut, neither wast thou washed in water to supple thee; thou wast not salted at all, nor swaddled at all. None eye pitied thee, to do any of these unto thee, to have compassion upon thee; but thou wast cast out into the open field, to the loathing of thy person, in the day that thou wast born." How then did Israel spring into being and greatness from this low and loathsome condition? We are told in the 6th and following verses. "And when I passed by thee, and saw thee polluted in thine own blood, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, Live; yea, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, Live." Here we have God's marvelous loving kindness to Israel in her infancy, and this loving kindness He continued to the house of Jacob notwithstanding their rebellion, their obstinacy, their idolatry, and their unbelief. I will give you a few passages which speak of God's dealings with Israel in Egypt, in the Wilderness, and in Canaan. And then, I shall pass on to speak of the spiritual house of Jacob, and of the spiritual remnant of the house of Israel.

The first quotation is from the 6th of Exodus. God renews his covenant promise to Moses, saying, "I am the Lord; And I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the name of God Almighty, but by My Name JEHOVAH was I not known to them. And I have also established My covenant with them, to give them the land of Canaan, the land of their pilgrimage, wherein they were strangers. And I have also heard the groaning of the children of Israel, whom the

Egyptians keep in bondage ; and I have remembered My covenant. Wherefore, say unto the children of Israel, I am the Lord, I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will rid you out of their bondage, and I will redeem you with a stretched out arm, and with great judgment : And I will take you to Me for a people, and I will be to you a God : and ye shall know that I am the Lord your God, which bringeth you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians. And I will bring you in unto the land, concerning the which I did swear to give it to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob ; and I will give it you for an heritage : I am the Lord.” (verses 2—9.) I shall now quote from the 32nd of Deuteronomy a passage to shew you that God fulfilled His word of promise to Moses. “ For the Lord’s portion is His people ; Jacob is the lot of His inheritance. He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness ; He led him about, He instructed him, He kept him as the apple of His eye. As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings : So the Lord alone did lead him, and there was no strange god in him.” (verses 9—13.) Joshua’s exhortation to Israel just before his death is most striking. He reviews God’s goodness to Israel in the past, and foretells the judgments which shall befall Israel in the future for their transgressions and disobedience. “ And, behold, this day I am going the way of all the earth : and ye know in all your hearts and in all your souls, that not one thing hath failed of all the good things which the Lord your God spake concerning you ; all are come to pass unto you, and not one thing hath failed thereof.” But what does he say about the future ? “ Therefore it shall come to pass, that as all good things are come upon you, which the Lord your God promised you ; so shall the Lord bring upon you all evil things, until he have destroyed you from off this good land which the Lord your God hath given you. When ye have transgressed the covenant of the Lord your God, which He commanded you, and

have gone and served other gods, and bowed yourselves to them; then shall the anger of the Lord be kindled against you, and ye shall perish quickly from off the good land which He hath given unto you." (xxiii. 14—16.) "Hearken unto Me O house of Jacob, and all the remnant of the house of Israel, which are borne by Me from the belly, which are carried from the womb. And even to your old age I am He; and even to hoar hairs will I carry you: I have made and I will bear; even I will carry, and I will deliver you." Let this suffice for the literality of our text.

Now for the *spiritual* house of Jacob, and the *spiritual* remnant of the house of Israel. The *spiritual* descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, are the spiritual seed of Christ, and are thus described in the 3rd of Galatians: "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus." The reason of this he gives in the next verse: "For as many of you as have been baptized" by the Holy Spirit's baptism "into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." (verses 26-29). This is the spiritual remnant of the house of Israel according to the election of grace. (Rom. xi. 5). This remnant, this residue, this remainder is made up of all those who are *babes* in Christ, *children* in Christ, *young men* in Christ, and *fathers* in Christ, wherever scattered upon the face of the earth. God gathereth together in One even all His spiritual seed in Christ. (Eph. i. 10; John xi. 52). I must say a few words about each of these. (1) "*Babes* in Christ." St. Peter describes those to whom he wrote "as newborn babes." (1 Peter ii. 2). These babes are born of God. "Of His own will He brought them forth by His word of truth." They are *born crying*, which is a sign of life. Babes are helpless and dependent creatures. They have to be carefully and constantly nursed. They can neither wash themselves, nor clothe themselves, nor feed themselves. They can neither walk nor talk.

What a picture of babes in Christ. Now Jehovah Himself washes them, clothes them, feeds them, carries them, and instructs them as His own. Healthy babes generally grow quickly when first born, so do healthy babes in Christ. This will account for the counsel of the Apostle which he gave to young Christians: "As new-born babes long for the spiritual milk which is without guile, that ye may grow thereby unto salvation." (2) *Children* in Christ. St. John writes to such. He says, "I write unto you *little children*, because your sins are forgiven you for His name's sake." (1 John ii. 12). Our Lord often taught His disciples lessons by example. He gave them a lesson on *humility* when He set a little child in their midst, and said unto them, "Verily I say unto you, except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." (Mat. xviii.) They are called "dear children," by St. Paul.— "Be ye therefore followers of God, as *dear children*; and walk in love, as Christ hath also loved us, and hath given Himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savour." Eph. v. 1-2). These dear children whose sins are forgiven, and who have the grace of humility in their hearts, shew their love to their heavenly Father, and their willing obedience in running the way of His commandments. But these dear children have to be brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Solomon says, "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it." (Prov. xxii. 6). The Lord has His own way in training and educating His own children. He does not spare the rod and spoil the child. He chastises when chastisement is needful. The words of the Apostle are familiar to us all: "And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of Him: For whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the Father chasteneth not?

But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards and not sons." (Heb. xii.) This is the schooling, the training and discipline which the child of God receives at the hands of His dear and loving Father. It may not be joyous for the present, but grievous; nevertheless afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto all those who are exercised thereby. "Is Ephraim my dear son? Is he a pleasant child? for since I spake against him, I do earnestly remember him still: therefore my bowels are troubled for him; I will surely have mercy upon him, saith the Lord." (3) Now for a word about the *young men* in Christ. St. John writes to such:—"I write unto you, *young men*, because you have overcome the wicked one." The glory of young men is their strength. (Prov. xx. 29). How is it they are so strong? It arises out of *union* with the Lord. They are strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. They are strong in the strength which God supplies. They are strong in the grace and faith of our Lord Jesus Christ. These young men in Christ often wait upon the Lord and renew their strength, that they may do battle against sin, the world, the flesh and the devil. They are overcomers and even more than conquerors through Him who has loved them with an everlasting love. (4) But there are *fathers* in Christ. They are of "old age," and "hoar hairs." Grey hairs are generally a sign of decaying strength and weakness (Hosea vii. 9). I am sure that all those who are fathers in Christ are prepared to acknowledge their own weakness and helplessness. These things they have learnt by experience. But "hoar hairs" and the "grey head" denote *beauty* and *glory* also. "The *beauty* of old men is the grey head." "The hoary head is a crown of *glory*, if it be found in the way of righteousness," (Prov. xvi. 29; xx. 29). St. John says, "I write unto you, fathers, because ye have known Him that is from the beginning." Why call them fathers? Because of their deep experience, and because of their wisdom and knowledge. They know Jesus as set up in covenant from everlasting. They know Him as re-

vealed in the Word of God. They know Him spiritually and experimentally in their own souls. They know Him by daily communion and fellowship with Him. They can speak of Christ and of His goodness as no others can. This crown of beauty the Lord has put upon their heads. This is their privilege and their glory. Now read the text, and you will see how tenderly and how mercifully the Lord deals with His people in every degree of their growth and experience. "Hearken unto Me, O house of Jacob, and all the remnant of the house of Israel, which are borne by Me from the belly, which are carried from the womb: And even to your old age I am He; and even to hoar hairs will I carry you: I have made and I will bear; even I will carry, and will deliver you." Does not our text magnify the unchangeable character of God in the preservation of His people?

We shall now consider in the third place God's tender care and protection of the house of Jacob, and of all the remnant of the house of Israel. These things will appear from God's dealing with His people Israel in the *past*. "I have made thee," "I have borne thee," "I have carried thee." Let us look at these three expressions as they occur in the text. "*I have made thee.*" This refers literally to the *origin* and *formation* of Israel into a nation, a peculiar nation. The Lord had said of Israel: "I have created him for My glory; I have formed him; yea, I have made him." (xl. 7.) God called Israel by name and said unto him, "Thou art Mine." I have originated thee for Myself. I have given thee institutions, laws, ordinances, and promises, which I have not given to any other nation upon earth. "I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel; thy Saviour." "I am thy Creator, and thy King." Now is not this equally true of all the *spiritual* seed of Israel? Is not spiritual Israel a chosen generation, a holy nation, a peculiar people? Has not God originated them in Christ before the foundation of the world? Does He not create them anew in Christ in time? Does He not form Christ in them by His Holy Spirit?

And does He not give to them laws, ordinances, and promises which He does not give to any other nation in the world? The spiritual Israel of God is a nation of saints in Christ Jesus.

Again, the Lord says, *I have borne you* from the belly, or as the word means, *I have lifted you up*. He lifted Abraham out of Idolatry. He lifted Israel out of Egyptian slavery. He lifted him out of his low estate in the wilderness and placed him in the heights of Canaan. God remembered Israel of old in his low estate and set him on high, for His mercy endureth for ever. How delightfully and experimentally true all this is of the *spiritual* Israel of God. In what state does God find His Israel in this world? Are they not all naturally in a state of spiritual death, dead in trespasses and sins? Are they not in the horrible pit of confusion, and in the miry clay of their own corruption? Are they not bond-servants to the law? And are they not children of disobedience, being led by Satan captive at his will? Now the Lord says to every Spirit-taught child of God, "*I have borne thee*," or "*I have lifted thee up*." I have lifted thee up out of thy sins. I have lifted thee up out of the pit of misery, and out of the miry clay, and I have set thee upon Christ, the "Rock of Ages." I have lifted thee up out of Satan's kingdom and put thee into the kingdom of Jehovah Jesus. Now thou art a free man, an Israelite indeed, a citizen of no mean city, and a subject of the Everlasting King. Is not this a wonderful lift?

Again, the Lord says, "*I have carried you from the womb*." As if he had said, I carried your father Abraham from the land of the Chaldeans to Canaan. I also carried Isaac and Jacob hither and thither as it pleased Me. I carried Joseph into Egypt to preserve life for My people Israel. I carried the Patriarchs with their father and their families into the land of Pharaoh. At the appointed time I carried them out of that land, and I carried them through the Red Sea, and through the wilderness, and through the Jordan and into the land of Canaan. And as verily as I have carried you into

Babylon, so will I carry you out of it again. The Lord had carried Israel in infancy, in childhood, in manhood, and He would carry them in old age. What *spiritual* and *blessed* truth we have here on which the children of God can rest. The Lord has carried every babe in Christ in his infancy, nursing him and feeding him with food convenient for him. He has carried him and trained him in his childhood. He has carried him and encouraged him in his manhood. And He will not cease to carry and care for him when grey hairs appear. How do we know this? Because He says, "And even to your old age I am He." I am not like the gods of the heathen which can neither save themselves nor those who put their trust in them. "I, even I, am the Lord, and beside Me there is no Saviour." I am always of one mind, and I cannot be changed. What I have done that I will do. I will work, and who shall hinder Me? I change not, saith the Lord, therefore, the sons of Jacob are not consumed.

This brings me to notice, that as God has shewn His tender care and protection of His people Israel in the *past*, so He will in the *future*. I will *bear* you, and I will *carry* you, and I will *deliver* you. Read our text again and again, and meditate thereupon. You will see its applicability to Israel of old in God's providential dealings with them as His national and favoured people. God bare Israel as a man bears his son in all the way He brought him in the wilderness. (Deu. i. 31.) "He bare them and carried them all the days of old." (Isa. lxiii. 9.) But I shall no longer stand upon the literal, but speak to you of the spirituality of this part of our text. I will *bear* you, O ye children of Israel. Or I will *lift you up*, and present you upon the breastplate of My heart for a memorial before high heaven for ever. This is Jehovah Jesus within the veil bearing upon His heart all the names of His redeemed. He had borne their griefs in His life while on earth, and He had borne their sins when on the accursed tree, and now He bears their persons in heaven. They are graven on the palms of His hands. They are borne

upon His shoulders, and underneath are the everlasting arms of His powerful protection. Israel shall dwell in safety alone, even in God his Saviour.

Again, the Lord says, I will *carry* you. I will do to you in the *future* as I have done to you and your fathers in the past. I will carry you under all circumstances. If you be in trouble I will carry you through it. If you be in dangers I will carry you through them. I will carry you through the valleys of tribulation, and over all the mountains and hills of difficulty. But *how* will the Lord do this? Well, He says, "I will carry you in My bosom." Where does a tender parent carry her tender offspring, save in her bosom! And will she not rather suffer herself, than allow her dear ones to suffer? So it is with our God. He carries His own in His bosom for safety, warmth and protection. He carries them also in His arms and in His hands. And who can snatch a lamb out of God's bosom? Who can break the arms of Jehovah? Who can pluck the least of His little ones out of His hands? We hear and rejoice in His words: "I will *carry* you." Are you poor, weak, and worthless? "I will *carry* you." Are you afraid of the *fires* and *waters*? "I will *carry* you." Do you say the journey is long and the path is crooked and rugged? "I will *carry* you." Are you like Lazarus, laid full of sores at the Master's gate, desiring to be fed with a few crumbs from His table? If so, Jehovah is true to His word—He will *carry* you constantly, cheerfully, effectually, and triumphantly into Abraham's bosom, into heaven and glory. "I WILL CARRY YOU."

Again, and I will *deliver* you. Deliverance, Oh how sweet! But from what does the Lord deliver His people? He has already delivered them from their sins, from the curse of the law, and from wrath to come. Now, the people of God are very often an afflicted people. "Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivereth him out of them all." (Psalm xxxiv. 19). And as they are an afflicted people, so they are a tried and tempted people. The Lord delivered Noah out of the old world, Lot out of Sodom, Jeremiah

out of the pit, Daniel out of the den of lions, the three Hebrew children out of the fiery furnace, Jonah out of the belly of hell, and Paul out of prison. "The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations." Every trial and every temptation has its "need be." The Lord puts the crown of life upon all those whom He delivers out of temptations. The people of God have many enemies to contend with—enemies from within, and enemies from without. But the Lord delivers them out of the hands of all their enemies, that they may serve Him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before Him, all the days of their life. I will *deliver* you, and your deliverance shall be to the praise and glory of My grace.

I feel as if it were time to bring our subject to a close, and yet, I cannot do so without making the following observations:—(1) the *sovereignty* of God is most manifest in all His providential dealings with His people, both in nature and grace. I *will* and you *shall* is the language of our Lord God, the true and living God, and the everlasting King. (2) The *lovingkindness* of God also appears in His dealings with His own. Yea, He loved the people, and gave nations for their ransom and salvation. His love is from everlasting to everlasting, for having loved His own which are in the world, He loves them unto the end. His loving kindness is better than life. (3.) The *sympathy* of Jehovah is clearly shewn to be with His people in all their afflictions and sufferings. In all their afflictions, He is afflicted, and the Angel of His presence saves them. In His love and in His pity He redeems them, bears them, and carries them like a tender and compassionate father. The Lord is *unchangeable* towards His people. He is true to His Word. Not one of his promises ever fails. They are all absolute certainties in Christ Jesus. His Covenant is sure. This is a comfort to the weak and desponding children of God. (5) The *powerful protection* of God is exercised on behalf of His own people. He keeps them as the apple of His eye. He preserves them from all evil by His powerful care unto His

heavenly kingdom. (6) God in His *wisdom* and *goodness* provides for all accidents and mishaps which may befall His people by the way. He is never surprised, though His children may be, and often are perplexed and confounded at His wonderful dealings with them. (7) The *glory* of God is the *grand end* in all that He has done, is doing, and will do for His people. He has created them for His glory, He has saved them for His glory, and they shall be for His glory to the ends of the earth, and through the countless ages of eternity. After these observations, shall not we His poor dependent creatures, though saved by grace Divine, say, "Speak Lord for thy servants desire to hear thy voice." And He answering shall say to us, "Hearken unto Me, O house of Jacob, and all the remnant of the house of Israel, which are borne by Me from the belly, which are carried" by Me "from the womb: And even to your old age I am He; and even to hoar hairs will I carry you: I have made, and I will bear; even I will carry, and will deliver you." All praise to our Covenant God for His tender care and protection, and for His unfailing goodness and mercy! Amen, and Amen!!!

“THE GLORY OF THY KINGDOM.”

A SERMON

PREACHED BY THE

Rev. J. BATTERSBY

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AT VERULAM MISSION CHURCH, KENNINGTON ROAD,
LAMBETH, LONDON,

THURSDAY EVENING, SEPTEMBER 1ST, 1881.

In the 145th Psalm and at the 11th verse, you will read :

“THEY SHALL SPEAK OF THE GLORY OF THY KINGDOM,
AND TALK OF THY POWER.”

The title of this Psalm is, “DAVID'S PSALM OF PRAISE.” This is a most apt title, for the Psalm is one of praise from beginning to end. There is a time in the experience of the children of God when their prayers are turned into praises. And when this is the case, there are few Psalms more suitable for meditation and spiritual melody, than this and the five which follow. They may be regarded as six Hallelujah Psalms. Each verse in our Psalm begins with a letter of the Hebrew alphabet taken in succession, with one omission. This may have been designed by the Author, in order that the Psalm might be the more easily remembered by those who committed it to memory. David in this Psalm magnifies the Name of God as King for His unsearchable greatness, for His mighty acts and wondrous works, for

His great goodness and everlasting righteousness, for His abounding compassion and tender mercy, for His upholding all that fall, and raising up all that be bowed down, and for abundantly satisfying the desires of all that wait upon Him, and for the final preservation of all those that love Him. The saints of God shall speak of the glory of His kingdom, and talk of His power; they shall make known to the sons of men His mighty acts, and the glorious majesty of His kingdom. His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and His dominion endureth throughout all generations. The Messiah, the King of Zion, and the King of saints, is the Person pre-eminent in this Psalm. David says, "I will extol Thee, my God, O King; and I will bless Thy Name for ever and ever." In the 45th Psalm, Christ is magnified as King of His Church, and so He is in this and in several other Psalms also. I wish you to bear in mind that I desire to exalt Christ as King in His own kingdom, and thus to induce the saints of God again and again to speak of the glory of His kingdom and to talk of His power. And may such be the theme of their song for ever and ever. Amen!

We shall now consider the text; first the persons, and secondly their conduct. I think this order will suit our purpose in bringing the subject before you. I have already said that Christ is the Person pre-eminent in this Psalm, and those who admire and praise Him most are the redeemed and quickened children of God. I hope with the help and guidance of the Divine Spirit, I shall be able to speak a word in season to those who are waiting at the gates of the great King. And if we should be thus favoured, then our meeting together this evening, will not be in vain in the Lord.

Consider first the Persons—"They," who are "*they*"? David speaks of himself in the 1st, 2nd, 5th, 6th, and last verses, saying what he will do. His heart was full of love and his mouth was full of praise. In our text he speaks of others—"They." The antecedent is "saints"—see the 10th verse. "And Thy saints shall bless Thee." Saints are persons set apart by the Holy

Ghost for Himself. These saints are not persons in nature's darkness, for they are born of God, they are partakers of the Divine nature, they are created anew in Christ Jesus, they have the image of Christ inwardly impressed upon them, and being in union with Him they are filled with the light of life, and desire to speak of the glory of Christ's kingdom, and to talk of His power.

There are several *features* in the Psalm whereby we know who are intended in the text. In the 14th verse, we read, "The Lord upholdeth all that *fall*, and raiseth up all that are *bowed down*." This is a description of the people of God who often fall into divers temptations. Now, St. James says, "Count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations." The Lord will make a way for you to escape, because no temptation hath befallen you, but such as is common to man. "Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God; I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will *uphold* thee with the right hand of My righteousness." (Isaiah xli 10). The Lord upholdeth all that fall, and raiseth up all those who are bowed down with a deep sense of their own sin and weakness. (Psalm xxxviii). Another *feature* of the persons in the text is this: "They *wait* upon the Lord; and He gives them their meat in due season." (verse 15.) Here, you see, the saints are *waiters*. They wait upon the Lord until He have mercy upon them. (Psalm 123). They wait upon the Lord and He renews their strength. (Isaiah xl. 31) They wait upon the Lord, and He feeds them with food convenient for them. Milk for babes, and strong meat for those who are of full age, even those who have their spiritual senses exercised to discern between good and evil. Again, these persons *call upon* the Lord. (vs. 18.) They are a *praying* people, for they are a *believing* people. They draw near to God for they believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of all those who diligently seek Him. They call upon God in sincerity and in truth, and are assured, that the Lord is nigh to all such. He is nigh to them as their Father. He is nigh to them

because He has brought them near to Himself by His own most precious Blood. He is nigh to them because He dwells in them by His Spirit. The Lord is nigh unto all that call upon Him, to all that call upon Him in truth, and He will help them. He hears their cry and saves them. Notice again, these persons are a God *fearing* people. "He will fulfil the desire of them that *fear* Him." (19th verse.) This is a holy fear which God has put into their hearts. His covenant promise runs thus: "I will put My fear in their hearts." "They shall be My people, and I will be their God." (Jer. xxxii.) Now where this fear is, there is a real desire to worship God in spirit and in truth. The desires of all such, the Lord will fulfil according to His promise. The last *feature* which I shall mention is this, that the persons in the text are *lovers* of God. "The Lord preserveth all them that *love* Him." (20th verse.) The love of Christ is in their hearts. But how did it get there? The love of God, even the love of Christ, is shed abroad in their hearts by the Holy Spirit. If you and I love the Lord, if we love His Word and His ordinances, it is because the Holy Spirit has been at work in our souls producing in us His pleasant fruits. Love is the queen of graces. (1 Cor. xiii.) I think I have said enough to shew you who are intended by the term "they" in our text. "*They*," are the saints; "*they*," are a *tried* and *troubled* people; "*they*," are a *waiting* people; "*they*," are a *praying* people; "*they*," are a God *fearing* people, and "*they*," are a people who *love* the Lord. Now these are the persons to speak of the glory of Jehovah's kingdom and to talk of His power. These are they who shall render everlasting praise unto Him Who is King of kings, and Lord of lords.

This brings us to consider, Secondly, the conduct of these persons: "They shall speak of the glory of Thy Kingdom, and talk of Thy power." I shall throw this part of my subject under two heads. Under the *first head*, I shall deal with the following questions: (1) What is meant by "*Thy Kingdom?*" (2) What by the "*Glory of Thy Kingdom?*" and (3) What it is "*to speak* of the

glory of Thy Kingdom?" Under the *second head*, I shall endeavour to show you what is meant: (1) by "*Thy Power*," and (2) what it is "*to talk of Thy Power*." These we shall regard as five questions, which we shall try to answer.

We shall now proceed to explain under the first head, (1) what is meant by "Thy Kingdom." In reading the Scriptures, we often meet with the following expressions, "the kingdom," "the Kingdom of God," "the kingdom of heaven," "His kingdom," "My kingdom," and "Thy Kingdom," as in our text. I am aware, there are some persons who see no difference in the use of these phrases as they occur in the Scriptures. I think I do. But I do not propose to give you the various shades of meaning which these phrases contain, but rather to speak to you of Christ's kingdom as the *Kingdom of grace and glory*. I think we shall see the sovereignty of Jehovah Jesus most manifest in His kingdom, and shall be able to say of Him, as David did of old, "Thine is the kingdom, O LORD, and Thou art exalted as Head above all." (1 Chron. xxix. 11.) The kingdom is the Lord's, and He is the Governor thereof. I would impress upon you the idea of the sovereignty of King Jesus in ordering and managing all the affairs in His kingdom of grace and glory. Jesus reigns without a rival in His kingdom.

"Thy Kingdom of Grace." Christ spake of Himself as the King of this kingdom when He said to Pilate: "My kingdom is not of this world: if My kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is My kingdom not from hence. Pilate therefore said unto Him, Art Thou a King then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a King. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Everyone that is of the truth heareth My voice." (John xviii. 36, 37). The Messiah had been spoken of by the Prophets as the "King of Zion," "the King of Israel," "the King of Righteousness," and as "the King coming to Jerusalem and

bringing Salvation." The Magi came from the east to worship Jesus the new born king (Matt. ii.) He died and rose again as King triumphant over every foe, and He now lives and reigns as King to die no more.

Jesus possessed all the necessary qualifications for a King. The last words of David are strictly true of Him:—"He that ruleth over men must be *just*, ruling in the *fear* of God." (2 Sam. xxiii. 3). Solomon prayed that God would give him "an understanding heart," that he might rule a great people with wisdom and judgment. (1 Kings iii. 9). Now Jesus was filled with the spirit of wisdom and understanding, with the spirit of counsel and might, with the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord. He was quick to discern and to judge righteous judgment. Righteousness was the girdle of His loins, and faithfulness the girdle of His reins. (Isaiah xi.) Such are some of the qualifications of Jehovah Jesus Who rules and governs in His kingdom of grace and glory.

Now for the subjects of His kingdom of grace. They are mentioned in the 1st chapter of St. Luke's Gospel. "Jesus shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David: and He shall reign over the *house of Jacob* for ever; and of His kingdom there shall be no end." (verses 32, 33.) Can there be any misunderstanding about the subjects of Christ's kingdom? I think not. They are the *spiritual seed* of Jacob, coming from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south, to sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the Prophets in the kingdom of God and of His Christ. (Luke xiii.) Whatever Jewish reference there may be in the passage in the 1st of Luke, I hope you will not forget the kernel while admiring the shell.

I shall now say a few words about the management of Christ's kingdom. By this I mean the *external* and *internal* management of His kingdom. *Externally* He manages it by His Word, and *internally* by His Spirit. The King said to His subjects, His disciples, just before

He left them, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen." (*Mat. xxviii.*) The King has given to His subjects Ordinances which they are to observe, and laws which they are to obey. He spake as never man spake. He spake as THE ONE having authority. He told His disciples that they should receive power from on high, after that the Holy Ghost had come upon them, and that they should be His *witnesses* unto the uttermost parts of the earth. (*Acts i. 8.*) It is clear, then, that in the *external* management of His kingdom, He has published His laws, which are to be the sole rule and guide of His subjects, that He has appointed Ordinances to be kept in loving remembrance of Him, and that He has His ministers who shall proclaim His Word and enforce His commandments. Now the *internal* management of His kingdom is carried on by the Holy Ghost. He convinces the sinner of his sins, and turns him to Christ from the error of his way. This is the good work begun by the Spirit, and which He carries on unto the day of the Lord Jesus Christ. Some of the properties of this kingdom are given us by St. Paul: "For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink." This is the negative aspect of the kingdom. Eating and drinking neither make us, nor unmake us inheritors of the kingdom of Christ. The kingdom is *spiritual*, and the subjects of it are *spiritual*. Some of the *properties* of the kingdom are "righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." (*Rom. xiv. 17.*) "Righteousness," this is Christ in me and manifested by me, through the power of the Holy Ghost. "Peace," this is that peace which passes all understanding. It is the peace of God in the soul inwrought by the Divine Spirit. When Christ is realized within, then there is great peace. "Joy," this is joy in God, and joy in Christ, and joy in the Holy Ghost. This oil of joy when inwardly felt

and experienced in the soul, comforts the mourner in Zion, and is the garment of praise, which Jehovah bestows, for the spirit of heaviness. This kingdom of grace in the heart is a kingdom of power and great glory. I was about to say, that it is the miraculous power of the Holy Ghost working within. It is indeed a miracle of grace for a sinner to be made an heir of glory. I know that some persons object to my phraseology, but why, I am unable to say. I see no good reason for making the least alteration, and until I do, I shall still continue to speak of a sinner saved from hell as a "miracle of grace." The kingdom of grace, which prevails in the hearts of the regenerate, does not spring in any way from the world. Christ said, "My kingdom is not of this world." It is as if he had said, "My kingdom is from above, and had its origin in heaven, and not from beneath, nor yet from this world. My kingdom is a spiritual kingdom, and is managed by My Spirit. The carnal world cannot understand these things, but those who are possessed of the Spirit discern them and rejoice in them." The Holy Ghost manages the kingdom of grace in the hearts of the children of God. He is the Revealer, Manifester, and Manager of Christ's kingdom in the souls of all who go to heaven and glory.

The kingdom of glory is the kingdom of grace in fulness and perfection. The saints who have departed this life are with the Lord in glory. The Apostle enjoyed Christ on earth, still he had a desire to depart and to be with Him in heaven, which he regarded as better. (Phil. i. 21-23.) He had been caught up into Paradise in vision and had heard unutterable words. (2 Cor. xii.) He could speak of the saints as they are now with Christ filled with the fulness of joy, and with pleasures never ending. It is not of the kingdom of glory, as now enjoyed by the saints in heaven, that I am about to speak, but of that kingdom of glory, as it shall be made manifest at the coming of Christ, and after the resurrection of those who have fallen asleep in Him. The dead in Christ shall rise first. "But every man shall

rise in his own order: Christ the first fruits; afterward they that are Christ's at His coming. Then cometh the end"—The end of His Mediatorial kingdom, and the end of the Gospel dispensation—"When He shall have delivered up the *kingdom* to God, even the Father." (1 Cor. xv. 23-24). Now what is this kingdom which Christ shall deliver up to His Father? Surely, this is the kingdom of saints, the whole church of God, which Christ had bought with His Blood. He had first received them from the Father, and now He delivers them back again to the Father, a redeemed, regenerated, saved, resurrectionised, and glorified people. Christ will then say to His Father, "Behold I and the children which Thou hast given Me"! Then the church will appear in her perfection and beauty, a glorious church, having neither spot, nor wrinkle, nor any such thing. Then Christ shall reign in the midst of His saints. Now He reigns in their hearts by His Spirit, but then He shall reign before His ancients Personally, visibly, and gloriously. *Then*, shall He appear in His glory and all His saints with Him. *Then*, shall they be like Him, seeing Him as He is. *Then*, shall they be glorified together with Him. This is the hope of the church. Her blessed and glorious hope! The words in the 7th of Daniel may be taken as descriptive of the Son of Man reigning in His kingdom of grace and glory. "I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." Other kingdoms may rise and fall like the Babylonian, the Persian, the Grecian, the Roman, and many others, but Thy kingdom, O Jehovah Jesus, is an everlasting kingdom, and Thy dominion endureth throughout all ages. They shall speak of the glory of Thy kingdom, for Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and Thy dominion shall continue throughout the ages of eternity.

Now what are we to understand by the "GLORY" of Thy kingdom? Surely the glory of Jehovah's kingdom excels the glory of all kingdoms. We often read of the glory of the Lord in the Old Testament. The glory of the Lord appeared in the cloud which went before Israel in the wilderness. (Ex. xiii. 21, xvi. 10.) The glory of the Lord abode upon Mount Sinai six days, and on the **seventh day, the Lord spake to Moses out of the midst** of the cloud. (Ex. xxiv. 16.) The glory of the Lord filled the Tabernacle. (xl. 35.) The glory of the Lord filled the Temple of Solomon. (2 Chron. vii. 1.) The glory of the Lord filled the house which Ezekiel saw. (xliii.) And the glory of the latter house is to be greater than the glory of the former, saith the Lord of hosts. (Hag. ii.) Jehovah's kingdom is to be filled with glory, even with Christ, Who is the Father's glory, and the express image of His Person. (Heb. i. 3.) The disciples were privileged with a sight of the glory of the Only begotten Son of the Father, full of grace and truth. It is only in the face of Jesus Christ, that we behold the glory and splendour of Jehovah. Now, we see the glory of Jehovah Jesus by faith. This is the spiritual eye which sees Him as revealed in the glass of His Word. We walk by faith in the kingdom of grace, and not by sight. Christ in the glory of His Person, Christ in the glory of His offices, and Christ in the glory of His kingdom is seen and understood by all those who have been taught by the Spirit of God. Is not Christ all in all to the believer in the kingdom of grace? Does not the child of God now look to the Lord Jesus Christ for His Blood to cleanse him, for His Righteousness to clothe him, for His grace to strengthen him, for His counsel to guide him, and for His Spirit to cheer him on his way to the heavenly glory. The central figure in the kingdom of glory will be Jehovah Jesus, the Son of the living God. The tabernacle of God shall then be with men, and He shall dwell in their midst, and be their light and their glory for ever. (Rev. xxi.) The prayer of Jesus will then be fully answered: "Father, I will that they also, whom Thou hast given

Me, be with Me where I am; that they may behold My GLORY, which Thou hast given Me: for Thou lovedst Me before the foundation of the world." (John xvii. 24.) Dwell upon the words "MY GLORY," CHRIST'S GLORY. How enrapturing! This is the glory of the Lord which shall be revealed, and all the saints of God shall see it together. *Then*, shall the Church of God call her walls salvation, and her gates praise. *Then*, shall it be said to her, "The sun shall be no more thy light by day; neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee: but the Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory. Thy sun shall no more go down; neither shall thy moon withdraw itself: for the Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended." (Isa. lx. 19-20) The glory of this kingdom is an everlasting glory.—A glory which shall endure throughout the never-ending ages of eternity.

The occupation of the saints shall be, that they shall speak of the glory of Thy kingdom. They shall speak of the glory of Jesus as He is a Divine Person, and render unto Him the honour which is due to His Name. They shall speak of His glory as He is God-Man Mediator, now sitting at the right hand of the Majesty on high, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come. They shall speak of His glory as He is the Head of the Church, and shall declare that in Him all fulness dwells, and that in all things He has the pre-eminence. They shall speak of the glory of His Salvation, both of its greatness, and of its durability. They shall speak of His glory in praise and thanksgiving, saying, "Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honor, and power, unto the Lord our God." *Then*, shall all the saints of God be glad and rejoice and ascribe all praise to Him Who reigns for ever and ever as their Lord God Omnipotent.

Let us now consider the latter part of our text: "and talk of Thy power." (1.) What is implied in the words, "Thy power"? and (2.) what is it "to talk of Thy

power"? Now, what is implied in the words, "*Thy power*"? I understand that the power of Christ as King is especially intended in these words. The power of Christ is seen in this, that He is the *Creator*, the *Preserver*, and the *End* of all things. I shall only give you one Scripture in proof of this statement. "The Son is the image of the invisible God, the first born of every creature: For by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him, and for Him: And He is before all things, and by Him all things consist." (Col. i. 15-17.) Is not this sufficient to shew you that Christ is the first, the middle and the end of all things? The *power* of Christ is seen in His *providential dealings* with His subjects. I would recommend you to read the 107th Psalm, which fully illustrates this point. The manifold providence of Jehovah over travellers, over captives, over sick men, and over seamen, is most carefully described by the Psalmist. In His dealings with travellers, you see Jehovah as their Redeemer. In His dealings with captives, you see Jehovah as their Deliverer. In His dealings with sick persons, you see Jehovah as their Healer and Restorer. And in His dealings with seamen, you see Jehovah granting a wonderful experience to His people. Four times in this Psalm are men called upon to praise the Lord for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men, in these words: "Oh that men would praise the Lord for His *goodness*, and for His wonderful works to the children of men." Shall we not unite with the Psalmist, and praise Christ in the firmament of His power? Shall we not say: praise Him for His mighty acts: and praise Him according to His excellent greatness. The *power* of Christ is seen in the *miracles* which He wrought when He was upon earth. The works which He did in His Father's name bear witness of Him and of His power. (John x. 25.) He said, "Believe Me for the very works' sake." (John xiv. 2) Some of His miraculous works were, "The blind receive

their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the Gospel preached to them." Surely, in these wonderful works, we behold a grand display of the power of Christ. The power of Christ is seen in His marvellous work of *Redemption*. Consider Christ in conflict with Satan and sin, in conflict with death and hell, and then think of His power. He conquered Satan on his own battle field. He put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. He swallowed up death in victory. The gates of hell had no power to prevail against Him. Triumphant, He exclaims before He ascends to His throne of Mediatorship in heaven, "All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth." And afterwards in Patmos, John hears his loving, though powerful voice, saying, "I am He that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death." What more shall I say about the *power* of Christ? Well, He has power to justify the sinner by His Blood, which Blood is all powerful. He has power to give life to the spiritually dead. "He quickeneth whom He will." He has power to call a people out of the world, and to sanctify them for Himself. He has power to hold them in His hand, and to preserve them unto His heavenly kingdom. He has power to raise them from the dead in the morning of the Resurrection. He has power to make them inherit the throne of His glory for ever. The saints shall *talk* of Thy power. And no wonder.

They shall talk of Thy power. The saints of God have always been *talkers*. And why not? They have got some one to talk about. It is impossible to stop the mouths of the saints from talking. They will talk of Christ. Now, there are *two classes of talkers* mentioned in the Word of God. The first class are those who are *unruly, vain, and foolish talkers*. St. Paul has spoken of these on more than one occasion. (see Titus i. 10, Eph. v. 4.) Amongst those who belong to this class, I place Cain who talked with his brother Abel, and afterwards slew him. (Gen. iv. 8.) Joseph's

brethren were foolish talkers when they conspired together to put him to death. (Gen. xxxvii.) The counsel which Ahithophel gave to Absalom, when they conspired together against David, was foolish talking. (2 Sam. xv., xvi., xvii.) The Scribes and Pharisees, the Sadducees and Herodians, conferred together how they might tempt and entangle Christ in His talk, and finally slay Him. They were foolish talkers. The chief priests and scribes were foolish talkers when they agreed to give Judas thirty pieces of silver, if he would betray Jesus into their hands. And so we might go on speaking of those who are not only foolish talkers, but wicked, and desperately wicked talkers. Those are foolish and vain talkers too, who speak of themselves as being better than their neighbours. They may use the words of the proud Pharisee, and thank God, that they are not as other men are. But then, this is foolish talking. And then, there are those who speak as if they were able to do so much in saving themselves. This is also foolish talking. You know what Solomon says of such persons. These are His words: "Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit? There is more of a fool than of him." I shall now pass on and see, if we can discover any that understand and know how to talk wisely.

The *second class* of talkers of whom we read in the Scriptures are those who talk of Christ and of His power *humbly* and *wisely*. Now we discover such persons as these in the days of the Prophet Malachi. "Then they that feared the Lord spake (talked) often one to another: and the Lord hearkened, and heard" what they said, "and a book of remembrance was written before Him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon His Name." Neither these persons nor their conversation is forgotten before the Lord. He remembers them and makes a most precious promise to them: "And they shall be Mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up My jewels; and I will spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth him." These are the persons on whom the Sun of righteousness arises with healing in His wings. How

delightful to talk with Jesus. Now, when our Lord was transfigured before His disciples upon the holy mount, there appeared Moses and Elias *talking* with Him. The subject of conversation seems to have been that of the Death and Resurrection of the Lord of glory. (Luke ix.) These are two all important subjects. You will remember that two of our Lord's disciples went from Jerusalem to Emmaus on the very day that Jesus rose from the dead, and "*they talked together* of all those things which had happened." Now, what had happened? Christ had been betrayed, He had been crucified, and He had also risen again from the dead. It strikes me that the chief topic of their conversation would be the Resurrection. This we gather from the 24th chapter of St. Luke's Gospel, to which I refer you. Jesus drew near to these disciples, and went with them, and freely conversed with them, but they knew Him not, for their eyes were holden. The disciples told Jesus their story, after which, He impressed upon them, that Christ ought to suffer these things, and then to enter into His glory. And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself. What an unfolding of God's Word. He then opened their eyes, and they knew Him; but He vanished out of their sight. And now what is their confession, as they talk one to another? They say, "Did not our heart burn within us while He talked with us by the way, and while He opened to us the Scriptures." Now you see what these disciples had been talking about. They had been talking of Jesus and of His sufferings; they had been talking of Him as the Redeemer of Israel, and of His Resurrection from the dead. They had not talked together in vain, for the Lord heard them, and remembered them, and communed with them to the warming, comforting and gladdening of their hearts. O Lord Jesus favour *us* with such an interview with Thyself.

In conclusion, what are we to talk about? About our neighbours? About science? About business? About politics? These may be all very well in their place. I

think we have got something better to talk about than these things. The Psalmist says, "I will talk of Thy doings." "I will talk of Thy wondrous works." "I will talk of Thy power." Who can exhaust the wonders of our Triune Jehovah? Who can sound the depths of the love of Jesus in saving sinners? Who can measure the greatness of His power and might? Who can behold the glory of His majesty and live? Who? The saints shall speak of the glory of His kingdom and talk of His power; they shall make known to the sons of men His mighty acts, and the glorious majesty of His kingdom, for His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and His dominion endureth throughout all generations. Beloved brethren, shall we not say: Let the name of our King, Jehovah Jesus, and the glory of His kingdom, together with the power of His might, be the theme of our song for ever and ever! Amen! and Amen!!

“BEING JUSTIFIED FREELY BY HIS GRACE.”

A SERMON

PREACHED BY THE

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AT VERULAM MISSION CHURCH, KENNINGTON ROAD,
LAMBETH, LONDON,

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*In the 3rd Chapter of St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans,
and at the 24th verse, you will read:*

“BEING JUSTIFIED FREELY BY HIS GRACE THROUGH THE
REDEMPTION THAT IS IN CHRIST JESUS.”

I know of no subject, which is of greater importance to the children of God, than the one which our text contains. Justification before God is one of the richest blessings in the Covenant of grace. “What is man that he should be clean? and he that is born of a woman that he should be righteous”? “How should man be just with God”? “How is a sinner justified and accepted in the sight of heaven”? These and kindred questions must always be of the deepest interest to those who are spiritually concerned about the salvation of their souls. The doctrine of justification, which has to engage our attention this evening, is a foundation or fundamental doctrine of the Gospel. We need be careful in speaking

to you upon this subject, for if we treat it erroneously, it will be like a dangerous defect in laying the foundation of a building, the higher we raise the superstructure the greater will be the fall and ruin thereof. May the infallible Spirit of truth come upon us and preserve us from all error, and guide us into all truth for Christ's sake.

The following are the chief points which I am desirous of bringing before you. First, what is Justification? Secondly, what is it to be justified in the court of heaven, or before God? Thirdly, what is it to be justified in the court of conscience? and Fourthly, what is it to be justified before men? Now, if I should be able to give you clear and Scriptural answers to these questions, I think you will then obtain to some extent at least, correct views of this foundation doctrine of the Gospel of the Grace of God. Try and remember the subject of Justification under the varying aspects now to be presented to you.

Now for our first question: What is Justification? When I speak to you of Justification, I mean Justification as it is taught us in the Word of God. What is the true Scriptural sense of the word *Justification*? I venture to say that *Justification* is the *esteeming, accounting, reckoning, and declaring* a person righteous. This will appear from many Scriptures in which the words "justify," "justified," and "justification," are used in contrast with "condemn," "condemned," and "condemnation." Take the following: "If there be a controversy between men, and they come unto judgment, that the judges may judge them; then they shall *justify* the righteous, and *condemn* the wicked." (Deut. xxv. 1.) Here we have the declaring and pronouncing sentence as the case may be, either on the side of the righteous, or against the wicked. Job says, "Behold now, I have ordered my cause," that is, I have ordered my cause for trial, for judgment, and for sentence, and "I know that I shall be justified," or I know that sentence will be given in my favour, and that I shall be pronounced righteous. (Job. xiii. 18.) And again, he says, "God forbid that I should justify you," or pronounce and

declare you righteous. (Job. xxvii. 5.) Solomon, in his prayer at the dedication of the Temple, shews clearly the meaning of the word "justifying," that it is pronouncing a person righteous upon trial. "If any man trespass against his neighbour, and an oath be laid upon him to swear, and the oath come before Thine altar in this house: Then hear Thou in heaven, and do, and judge Thy servants, *condemning* the wicked, to bring his way upon his head; and *justifying* the righteous, to give him according to his righteousness." (1 Kings viii. 31-32.) So again in Proverbs (xviii. 15) "He that *justifieth* the wicked, and he that *condemneth* the just, even they both are an abomination to the Lord." It is an abomination to the Lord for a judge to pronounce the wicked righteous for a reward. And it is also an abomination to the Lord to take away the righteousness of the righteous from him. (Isaiah v. 23.) I shall only give you one reference to the New Testament where "*Condemnation*" and "*Justification*," are contrasted. In the 5th of Romans, "*Condemnation*" is the effect of one man's offence. "*Justification*" is the effect of one man's obedience and righteousness. Adam and Christ are contrasted in this chapter, and as we are connected with either, our standing before God is declared. Adam and all in him are offenders, guilty before the law, and consequently adjudged to be in a *state of Condemnation*. Christ and all in Him, are accepted of God, accounted righteous before the law, and consequently declared to be in a *state of Justification*. "Judgment was by one to *Condemnation*, but the free gift is of many offences unto *Justification*." From what I have now said, I think you will see the Scriptural sense of *Justification*. That it is pronouncing or declaring a person righteous.

Before proceeding to our second question, I wish to observe that there is a difference between Justification and the pardon of sin. These two subjects are frequently very closely connected, and yet there is a difference between them. They may go together, and still, they are not the same. Pardon is not justification; neither is justi-

cation pardon. A person who is pardoned is treated as a transgressor ; but a person who is justified is declared righteous. A person who is pardoned, is freed from the obligation of suffering for his crimes ; but a person who is justified, is declared worthy of life, because of his innocence. "Wisdom is justified of her children." (Mat. xi. 19.) But wisdom is never said to be pardoned of her children. Christ was "justified in the Spirit." (1 Tim. iii. 16). But Christ was never pardoned in the Spirit. God is justified in His sayings, but He is not pardoned in His sayings. (Rom. iii. 4.) Wisdom cannot be pardoned. Neither can God be pardoned, and yet a just and righteous sentence can be declared and pronounced on the side of Wisdom, of Christ, and of God. This is the very essence of *Justification*, and differs, as you will see, very strikingly from pardon. St. Paul speaks of *pardon* and *justification* as distinct blessings, in Acts xiii. 38-39. In the 38th verse, you have the criminal pardoned through Christ Jesus—"Be it known unto you, therefore, men and brethren, that through this Man is preached unto you the *forgiveness* of sins." And in the 39th verse, you have the believer *justified* by Christ Jesus: "And by Him all that believe are *justified* from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses." The transgressor is pardoned in mercy, but the believer is justified in righteousness. What then is *Justification*? It is a person accounted righteous in Christ Jesus before God. "There is therefore now *no condemnation* to them which are in Christ Jesus."

Let us consider, Secondly, what it is to be justified in the court of heaven or before God. "Being justified freely by His grace." This part of our text discovers to us the very foundation of our *Justification* in the sight of God. It is the grace of God which justifies *freely* and *gratuitously*. Now a person must be justified before God either by the *law of works*, or by the *law of grace*. We are told, that "by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified." (Gal. ii. 16.) Why so? Because the law is weak through the depravity of human nature to exact

perfect obedience to¹ its righteous claims and just requirements. The law makes prisoners of all both Jews and Gentiles. What saith the Scriptures: "There is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one." And after a further particular description of the sinful practices of men, he says, "Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God." The conclusion at which the Apostle arrives is this: "Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight: for the law is the knowledge of sin." There is no justification in the sight of God and in the court of heaven by the works, the deeds and the doings of the law. If a person be seeking to justify himself before God by the works of the law, he is still under its curse, and the wrath of God abideth upon him. (Gal. iii. 10., John iii. 36.) We must search out some other way of *Justification* in God's sight than by the law of works, and this other way is by the *law of grace*. The righteousness of God is now manifested without the law of works in justifying him which believeth in Jesus.

The moving cause in the justification of a sinner is the grace of God. There is no cause outside God himself why He should pardon the sinner and pronounce him righteous in Christ Jesus. How often do we meet with expressions of this sort: "Being justified by His grace." "By grace ye are saved." "Saved and called—according to His own purpose and grace." Now what do these expressions mean? Do they not set out to us the free and unmerited favour of God, as the *eternal source* and *unfailing spring* of all our salvation. And if all our salvation be of grace, then no part of it is of works. I shall give you two Scriptures in confirmation of what I say. The first is in the 34th of Exodus: "And the Lord descended in the cloud and stood with him there,

and proclaimed the name of the Lord. And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, The Lord, The Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, and transgression and sin." It would be impossible to give you a quotation from the Scriptures which more strongly, more fully, and more beautifully magnifies the grace of God as the foundation of a sinner's justification. I shall, however, add one from the 2nd chapter of the Epistle to the Ephesians:—"But God, Who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ. (by grace ye have been saved); and hath raised us up together and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: That in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. For by grace ye have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." (verses 4 to 10.) Now, if all our salvation be of grace, then Justification is of grace, for it is a prominent part in the great scheme of salvation. God has, according to His eternal purpose and grace, which He purposed in Christ Jesus, before the world began, blessed all His people with all spiritual blessing. But Justification is a spiritual blessing, and hence this blessing was given to all the elect of God in Christ Jesus from everlasting. And if such be the riches of God's grace: "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth." God's goodwill, free favour, unmerited love, and abounding grace, are the *sole foundation* and *moving cause* of a sinner's Justification in the court of heaven.

Notice, again, "*Being justified freely by His grace.*" This word "*freely*," confirms our view of Justification. Justified "*gratuitously*." Justified without any merit or cause in us. The idea conveyed by the word "*freely*," is the exclusion of everything in us or by us as the condition or cause of our Justification in the sight of God.

Our Justification before God is as much a *free gift* as Christ is a free gift. And we can say, "Thanks be unto God for His *unspeakable gift*." (2 Cor. ix. 15). You will see the meaning of the word "*freely*," and its use in our text, from the following passages: Our Lord said to His disciples—"Freely ye have received, *freely* give." (Mat. x. 8) Or in other words, they had received "*gratuitously*," and "*gratuitously*" they were to give. Again, it is said, "They hated me *without a cause*," That is, they hated me *undeservedly*. (John xv. 25.) And again, "Take of the water of life '*freely*,'" or "*gratuitously*." (Rev. xxii. 17.) I think that you must be forced to the conclusion that there is no cause or ground in us why God should justify any one of us in His sight. And if there be no cause in us, then the sole cause must be in Himself, and if in Himself, then it is *gratuitous*, so far as we are concerned. Being justified "*freely*," "*gratuitously*," by His grace, without any cause either good or bad in us. All glory to God for His *gratuitous* Justification.

But our text speaks of the means, or meritorious cause of our justification in the sight of God: "Through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." Now, we are also said to be justified by His blood. (Rom. v. 9.) Christ lived, and died, and rose again for our Justification. Whenever redemption and justification are connected with Jesus Christ, then our fall in Adam is implied. No fall in Adam no Redemption in Christ. In the 5th of Romans, Adam is the *One representative Man* by whom sin entered into the world, and death by sin. By this *one man's* offence death has reigned over all his posterity. By this *one man's* disobedience many were made sinners, according to the law, which curses every one which continues not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them. No one is justified in law in the sight of God. The *Other representative Man* is the Lord Jesus Christ. By this MAN the free gift of grace appears, and the gift of righteousness—even the one perfect obedience—which God is pleased withal. God has set forth His own dear Son to be the one propitia-

tion, atonement, and mercy seat for His people. This is spiritually enjoyed by faith in His blood. God has declared His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through His compassionate forbearance. God has published His righteousness, and is both just and the justifier of every believer in Jesus. All boasting before God is excluded. But, by what law? of works? No! But by the law of grace, the law of Christ, the law of the Spirit, which is the law of faith. My Redemption standing before God is in Christ Jesus. Christ has met all the charges of the law against me. Oh sinner, thou art not righteous, for the law charged sin upon thee. True, but Christ has been made sin for me. The law cursed thee, but Christ has been made a curse for me, and has redeemed me from the curse of the law. The law said pay me that thou owest, for I must have a perfect and an everlasting Righteousness. True, but the Lord Jesus Christ has brought in a perfect and an everlasting Righteousness. God has declared His Righteousness through Jesus Christ. God is just and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus. To put the subject in few words: *What is my Justification before God?* I venture to answer, CHRIST! and CHRIST ONLY!! My God and Father placed to my credit in heaven ONE WHOLE, PERFECT, AND COMPLETE CHRIST!! How glorious to be found in the Lord our Righteousness!!

In the Third place, what is it to be justified in the court of conscience? Hitherto, I have been speaking to you of Justification before God, or Justification in the court of heaven. This is Justification *objectively* considered, or God's *gratuitous* Justification of me in Christ, and for Christ's sake. My standing *in Christ* before God is *objective truth*; Christ's standing in me is *subjective truth*. Christ revealed *in me*, as *mine*, is my Justification in the court of Conscience. This is Justification *subjectively* considered, or Justification *experimentally realized* in my own soul by the powerful indwelling of the Spirit of God. St. Paul, addressing the saints at Corinth, says, "But ye are *washed*, but ye are *sanctified*, but ye are *justified* in the Name of the Lord Jesus, and by the

Spirit of our God." (1 Cor. vi. 11.) Here are three *experimental* truths mentioned which the Corinthian saints enjoyed. They were washed from all their sins in the blood of the Lamb. The Holy Ghost had purged their consciences by the application to them of the blood of Christ. They were also sanctified by the Spirit of God. If I understand this aright, they were not only separated from the world in effectual calling, but the principle of Divine and spiritual life had been planted in them, which drew their thoughts and affections to high, holy, and heavenly things. They were also *Justified*. By Justification in this verse, I understand to be meant the Holy Spirit's unfolding to the broken-hearted sinner, the perfect Righteousness of Jehovah Jesus, in which alone, the humbled penitent stands accepted and complete before God. This is indeed *experimental* Justification. This is realizing and enjoying Christ as our own. The Spirit glorifies Christ in us; for He receives of the things of Christ, and shews them unto us. Justification is one of the things which the Spirit receives of Christ, and which He makes known in the court of conscience. The Holy Spirit pronounces in the heart, and to the conscience, that Christ is the believer's Justification.

What is the instrumental means which the Holy Ghost uses in justifying the believer in the court of conscience? I venture to answer that the *instrumental means* of Justification in the court of conscience, is the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ in the hand of the Spirit. Our Lord said to the eleven: "Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you." (John xv. 3.) They were "*clean*," because Judas was removed from them. They were "*clean*," because cleansed in the Saviour's blood. They were "*clean*" or justified by the Word which Jesus spoke to them. The Spirit made the Word work effectually in them. Now where is the Righteousness of God revealed, save in the Gospel? What should we know of Justification before God without the Gospel of Christ? What should we know of that Righteousness which God looks upon as perfect, if

we had not His Revelation? St. Paul said he was not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ: for it was the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth. For *therein*, that is, in the Gospel, is the Righteousness of God revealed. (Rom. i. 16-17.) The Gospel of Christ is sometimes called *the faith* for which we are to contend earnestly. (Jude 3.) We may know many things about God as revealed in the book of nature. In this book of nature, we may read His power, His wisdom, and His knowledge. But we do not read in the book of nature how sin entered into the world, and *how* a sinner is justified and saved. These facts are revealed to us only in the Gospel of the grace of God. The Gospel contains God's own revelation of Himself. In the Word of God is revealed to us, the true nature of sin and its consequences, and in the same Word is revealed to us the only means of salvation. God puts honour upon His own Word, and makes it the blessed instrument in the salvation of souls.

Now arises another question: Why are we said to be justified by faith? God justifies the Jews by faith, and the Gentiles through faith. (iii. 30.) Justification by faith stands in contrast with Justification by works. And we are told, that by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified. (Gal. ii. 16). According to this then, there is no Justification either in the court of heaven, or in the court of conscience by works. And if it be not of works, then it is of faith, which is not a work of the creature but of God. "To him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." (Rom. iv. 5.) What is this *Justifying faith*? Some have said that it is the spiritual *eye* which sees and appreciates Christ as He is revealed in the Scriptures of truth. That it is the spiritual *hand* which receives and embraces Him. That it is the spiritual *mouth* which feeds upon Him as the true bread sent down from heaven. These illustrations may be regarded as aptly setting forth faith. But who gives the seeing eye? Who gives the receiving and embracing hand? Who gives the mouth which takes in the food?

Surely, God is the Maker and Giver of all these? Justifying faith is the gift of God. It is given unto you to believe. Faith is the fruit of the Holy Ghost. Let us notice a verse which some persons consider so very difficult to understand. Read Romans i. v. 17: "For therein (that is in the Gospel) is the Righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, the just shall live by faith." The word for faith is used in this verse both for the Gospel, and for the faith wrought by the Spirit in the heart. Hence, out of the faith of the Gospel to the faith which the Holy Ghost has produced in the heart of the child of God. "From faith to faith," may be regarded as two vessels. Out of the former into the latter. You have similar constructions in the Scriptures. "Emptied from vessel to vessel." (Jer. xlviii. 11.) "Passed from death unto life." (John v. 24, 1 John iii. 14.) God has revealed His Righteousness in the Gospel, which Gospel is called the faith. This is seen and realized by that faith which is wrought in the heart by the Spirit of God. Now let us see how these things are brought together in the 10th of Romans: "The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach." This is the vessel of faith, out of which the believer draws water, even living water, from the wells of salvation. Now for the other vessel: "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt *believe in thine heart* that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man *believeth* unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For the Scripture saith, Whosoever *believeth* on Him shall not be ashamed." (vs. 8 to 12.) The Apostle had proved the case before from the Old Testament, saying, "The just shall live by faith." Now every "*just*" or *righteous* person has been quickened by the Spirit, and therefore, is a spiritual person. These are the just, or the just ones, who live by faith. Our Lord rebuked Satan, saying, "It is written, man shall not live by bread alone, but by *every word* that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." (Mat. iv. 4.) This must

impress you, that the believer lives upon the food which the word of God supplies. And it is this faith which is reckoned for righteousness, because the believer is fully persuaded that what God has promised in His word, He is able also to perform.

When a person realizes his Justification in the court of conscience, then there are fruits or evidences which he enjoys. Many Christians like comfortable evidences, but they do not always get what they like. They would have these evidences given them, I have no doubt, if they were always good for them. I find that many of God's dear children are looking continually to their own vile-ness, to the corruption of their own wicked hearts, as if that were to yield them some comfort, happiness, peace and joy. I am sure that when I look *within*, I feel like the Apostle, "O wretched man that I am." And is it to be wondered at? when we consider that "*within* we are full of all uncleanness." My beloved brethren, peace and happiness, joy and gladness, in the soul, never spring from the old man, but are the out-come of the new man, which God the Holy Ghost has renewed in knowledge, in righteousness, and in true holiness, after the image of Him that created him. What then are some of the *fruits* or *evidences*, which the child of God enjoys in his own soul, when he realizes for himself his Justification in the court of conscience? I shall only mention two or three of these fruits. *Peace* is one of the fruits. Being justified by the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and this great truth being revealed in the soul by the Spirit—then what? "*By faith* we have *peace* with God through Jesus Christ our Lord." Standing in Christ by faith "*we rejoice* in hope of the glory of God." (Rom. v. 1-2.) But this is not all: Faith *glorifies* God. You remember God's promise to Abraham, that he should have a son, and that he himself should be a father of many nations. *Reason* said, "No"! "No"! "Impossible"! But what did faith say? "He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, *giving glory to God.*" (Rom. iv. 20.) After these things, I think I may venture to advance to my last point.

Fourthly, what is it to be justified before men? Hitherto I have shewn you what is meant by Justification; what it is to be justified in the court of heaven; and, what it is to be justified in the court of conscience. Now, I shall endeavour to shew you what it is to be *justified before men*. I do not mean before *all* men. St. Paul asked his brethren at Thessalonica, to pray for him and others, "that they might be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men: for all men have not faith." (2 Thes. iii. 2.) What is it to be justified before men of faith? This is rather the idea which I wish to enlarge upon. And why? Well, the world knows nothing about Justification. And the carnal professor knows nothing about it. How, then, can these persons act as judges in so important a matter as that of the justification of a believer before men? Believers are justified before men in two ways: by their WORDS, and by their WORKS. In this part of our subject, we have not to deal with the THOUGHTS of believers, excepting so far as they are seen in their WORDS and WORKS.

Believers are justified before men by their WORDS. You will remember what our Lord said to the Pharisees in the 12th of St. Matthew's Gospel: "O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, *speake good things?* for out of the abundance of the heart the *mouth speaketh*. A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things; and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things. But I say unto you, that every idle word that men shall *speake*, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy WORDS thou shalt be *justified*, and by thy WORDS thou shalt be *condemned*." Men's words either *justify* them or *condemn* them. "A generation that curseth their father, and doth not bless their mother," (Prov. xxx. 11) is a condemned generation. But a generation which blesses father and mother, is a justified generation. Now believers are justified before men by their WORDS. But you may be saying, how does this appear? I shall now try to shew you. Believers are justified before men when they declare what is right according to the

Word of the Lord. What is their *conversation*? "Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me—and to him that ordereth his *conversation* aright will I show the salvation of God." (Psm. l. 23.) "Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him shew out of a *good conversation* his works with meekness of wisdom. (Jas. iii. 13) St Peter dwells much upon being *holy* in all manner of conversation; upon having an *honest* conversation; and upon having a *good* and *chaste* conversation. What is this, but a believer's Justification before man by his words? And then believers *confess* Jesus before men and are not ashamed of Him. They confess with their mouth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. And like Peter they confess that Jesus is the Son of the living God. Every prayer offered unto God through Jesus Christ by a believer, is a justifying of him before men. And every hymn of praise and thanksgiving which goes up to the throne of God in heaven through our adorable Mediator is a justifying of the believer before men. O most gracious God, grant that all our words, whether in our confessions of Thy dear Son, or in our prayers unto Thee through Him, or in our praises and thanksgivings unto Thee by Him, may be alway with grace, seasoned with salt, and that Thy Holy Spirit may teach us how to order our conversation aright before every man.

As we are justified by our words before men, so also are we justified by our works before men. WORKS arising out of faith are called GOOD WORKS. A tree is known by its fruit, and so are believers by their WORKS. Abel, in faith, offered sacrifice to God, which was a good work. Noah in faith prepared an ark to the saving of his house, and this was a good work. Abraham, in faith, offered his son Isaac upon the altar, and this was a good work. Faith is *evidenced* by works. And hence it is, that St. James says, "Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only." Rahab evidenced her faith by her works, and of her it is said, she was "justified by her works." But the GOOD WORKS of these worthies never justified them before God, but were the evi-

dences, proofs, and fruits of a lively faith in Christ Jesus. Take a few passages which bring this subject before us in a practical manner. "What doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God." This verse covers the whole field of GOOD WORKS. I might quote largely from the Epistles bearing upon this subject. "Let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not. As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all, especially unto them who are of the household of faith." (Gal. vi. 9-10.) Believers are to do good, and to be rich in GOOD WORKS. They are to be most careful to maintain GOOD WORKS. And indeed, real believers are the only persons who are capable of performing these GOOD WORKS. May the God of peace make us perfect in every GOOD WORK to do His will, working in us that which is well-pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ; to Whom be glory for ever and ever. May this great fact be settled in your minds, that a believer's Justification *before men*, is either by his WORDS or by his WORKS, and these WORDS and WORKS are the fruit of that faith which the Holy Ghost vouchsafes to every person whom He regenerates.

I must now conclude, and in doing so, let me give you in summary the substance of my Sermon this evening. I commenced by shewing you the importance of carefully considering the doctrine of Justification, which is a foundation doctrine of the Gospel. That a defect in laying this foundation, is dangerous to the superstructure. We divided our subject into four parts, and explained to you first, the meaning of Justification, as set forth in Holy Scripture. That it is *esteeming, accounting, reckoning, declaring* and *pronouncing* a person righteous. That Justification differs from the pardon of sin. Secondly, we have shewn you what it is to be justified before God, or in the court of heaven. That the *moving cause* of a Sinner's Justification in the sight of God, is *grace*—Justified by His grace. And not only so, but Justified "*freely*," or "*gratuitously*," by His grace. There is *no cause in the sinner* why God should justify

him. The cause is in God Himself, hence we are justified freely by His grace. The *means* or *meritorious cause* of our Justification before God, is Christ Jesus, Christ the Lord our Righteousness, therefore it is said, "through the Redemption that is in Christ Jesus." Jehovah Jesus is the REPRESENTATIVE MAN in the court of heaven. Thirdly, we have shewn you what it is to be justified in the court of conscience. This is Justification *experimentally realized* in the heart by the power of the Holy Ghost. The Gospel is the *instrumental means* which He uses in *making known* the glad tidings to the soul, whilst faith is the spiritual eye which sees and enjoys the Saviour. And lastly, believers are justified *before men* both by their WORDS and by their WORKS. What more can I add to these things? unless it be that we supplicate the God of all grace to send down the Holy Ghost into our hearts, that we may be wholly inclined to adorn by our lives the doctrine of our God and Saviour in all things. May the Divine Spirit help us to glorify our Covenant God in all our THOUGHTS, our WORDS, and WORKS through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen! and Amen!!

Dr. JOHN OWEN on JUSTIFICATION, 1677.

"It may be observed that all things concerning Justification are proposed in the Scripture under a *judicial scheme*, or *forensic trial and sentence*. As, (1.)—A *judgment* is supposed in it, concerning which the Psalmist prays that it may not proceed on the terms of the law, Ps. cxliiii. 2. (2.)—The *Judge* is God himself, Isa. l. 7-8. (3.)—The *Tribunal* whereon God sits in judgment, is the "throne of grace," Heb. iv. 16. "Therefore will the Lord wait, that He may be gracious unto you; and therefore will he be exalted, that he may have mercy upon you; for the Lord is a God of judgment," Isa. xxx. 18. (4.)—A *guilty person*. This is the sinner, who is—so guilty of sin as to be obnoxious to the judgment of God;—Rom. iii. 19,—whose mouth is stopped by conviction. (5.)—*Accusers* are ready to propose and promote the charge against the guilty person;—these are the *law*, John v. 45; and *conscience*, Rom. ii. 15; and SATAN also, Zech. iii. 1. (6.)—The *charge* is admitted and drawn up in a *hand-writing* in form of law, and is laid before the tribunal of the Judge, in bar to the deliverance of the offender, Col. ii. 14. (7.)—A *plea* is prepared in the Gospel for the guilty person; and this is grace, through the blood of Christ, the ransom paid, the atonement made, the eternal righteousness brought in by the Surety of the covenant, Rom. iii. 23—25. (8.)—Hereunto alone the *sinner betakes himself*, renouncing all other *apologies* or *defensatives* whatever, Ps. cxxx. 2-3. Other plea before God there is none. He who knoweth God and himself will not provide or betake himself unto any other. Nor will he, as I suppose, trust unto any other defence, were he sure of all the angels in heaven to plead for him. (9.)—To make this plea effectual, we have an *Advocate* with the Father, and He pleads His own propitiation for us, 1 John ii. 1-2. (10.)—The *sentence* hereon is *absolution*, on account of the ransom, blood, or sacrifice and righteousness of Christ; with *acceptation* into favour, as persons approved of God, Job. xxxiii. 24." Vol. v. page 136.

“THE LORD’S SUPPER SCRIPTURALLY CONSIDERED,”

BY THE

REV. J. BATTERSBY,

(Vicar of St. James', Sheffield).

The substance of a Speech delivered in Manchester, before the
“Evangelical Protestant Union,” October 14th, 1880,

JAMES INSKIP, Esq., Clifton,

OCCUPIED THE CHAIR.

I much regret, that through indisposition, I was unable to attend this afternoon’s Meeting. I feel sure the subject must have been most interesting and profitable. I have heard of the excellent Paper read by our worthy Chairman upon “Ceremonial, Ecclesiastical, and Sacramental Consecration.” When I first saw the subject, I became thoroughly bewildered, and said, “there is a text for you, which will require a whole Dispensation to expound it fully.” I presume, however, that none of us object to “Ceremonial Consecration,” provided it be without superstition, nor to “Ecclesiastical Consecration,” which is only a “legal act,” accompanied with a religious service.—Nor, indeed, to “Sacramental Consecration,” if nothing be done but that which can be “proved by holy writ.” Now, if I should say a few words to you upon the subject of the “Lord’s

Supper and its Consecration," I hope you will bear with me. I do not think I shall contradict anything which the Chairman may have said this afternoon. I have no such intention. I wish it to be clearly understood, that I shall compromise no one but myself by remarks upon the "Lord's Supper." *I only* am responsible for any statements which I may make this evening. I like the Scriptural words, "THE LORD'S SUPPER," and prefer them to "HOLY COMMUNION," which are the Church's words. Why the Evangelical Clergy of the present day should prefer the language of the Church to that of the Scriptures when speaking of "the LORD'S SUPPER," I cannot understand. I suppose they have some good reason for their preference.

THE FOLLOWING WHILST FORMING THE SUBSTANCE OF THE SPEECH DELIVERED IN MANCHESTER, WAS ALSO READ BEFORE THE SHEFFIELD CLERICAL SOCIETY, JANUARY 7TH, 1881. THE REV. SAMUEL EARNSHAW, M.A., PRESIDED.

"THE LORD'S SUPPER SCRIPTUALLY CONSIDERED," is the subject of the Paper for this Evening. It is not my intention to say more than is absolutely necessary to introduce the subject to your notice. To treat the "Lord's Supper" fully, as set forth in the Scriptures, would require me to speak of its Institution and form; of the things represented by it; of the pledges given in it; of the persons for whom it is intended; and of its efficacy and use. This, though a wide field, will not deter me from saying what I intended to say.

The Ordinance has several *names* or *titles* given to it in the Scriptures. "The Eucharist" or "thanksgiving." (Mat. xxvi. 26, 27). "The Communion."

(1 Cor. x. 16). "The Lord's table." (1 Cor. x. 21). Probably, "Breaking bread." (Acts ii. 42—46, and Acts xx. 7). And "The Lord's Supper." (1 Cor. xi. 20). There can be no doubt as to the meaning of the Apostle when he speaks of the Ordinance as the "Lord's Supper." This is an excellent example for us to follow.

I often think that *many mistakes* are made about the "Lord's Supper," because of the *figurative language* which our Lord used. "Jesus took bread, and said, This is my body." "He took the cup also, and said, This is My blood of the New Testament." Now, *literally* understood, these sayings would be false, but *figuratively*, they convey most sublime and spiritual truths. I shall endeavour to illustrate what I mean by some kindred sayings of our Lord. He said, "I am the good Shepherd." *Literally*, He was not a Shepherd, but *figuratively* He was. He is like a Shepherd in several respects. He knows His sheep, and the number of them. He watches over them, and takes care of them. He provides for them, "making them to lie down in green pastures, and leading them beside the still waters." Again, Christ said, "I am the door." *Literally*, He was not, but *figuratively*, He was. A door denotes an entrance, and such is Christ. He is the only door of entrance into the true Church of God on earth, and into the kingdom of glory in heaven. Again, our Lord said, "I am the Vine." *Literally*, He was not, but *figuratively* He was. These words, "I am the vine, and ye are the branches," convey the idea of *vital* and *spiritual* union between Christ and His professing members. Jesus said, "I am the bread of life."

Literally, He was not bread, but *figuratively* and *spiritually*, He is bread to every believer. We might here multiply examples, but these will suffice to illustrate our meaning. In the "Lord's Supper" you have *figurative* language used, out of which, you have to gather the spiritual teaching of our Lord, according to the analogy of Scripture. If you take our Lord's words *literally*, you take a mere carnal view of the Ordinance, but if you take them *figuratively*, then you are led into spiritual communion with a dying, rising, ascending, interceding, and coming Saviour.

Now, we must not lose sight of the fact that the "Lord's Supper is a memorial of Christ." "Do this in remembrance of Me." Christ is remembered in the "Lord's Supper" by all who spiritually feed upon Him. They remember "His death and passion" and thus, they are in communion with Him spiritually, as the One Great High Priest of God, as the only sacrifice for sin, and as the *only death* by which comes life. "For as often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do shew the LORD'S DEATH till He come." But in the "Lord's Supper," we are also reminded of the INTERCESSION of Christ. He now appears in the presence of God for us. His blood speaks peace within the vail. We hear His comforting voice, saying, "Because I live, ye shall live also." We live and feed in full assurance of faith upon the Son of God, Who has loved us and given Himself for us, and who now ever lives to make INTERCESSION for us. Here is spiritual communion with Christ in the Ordinance. We are one with Him and He with us. But then this is *spiritual* and not *carnal* communion. In the "LORD'S SUPPER," we are reminded of the *coming*

again of the Son of God. "Ye do shew the Lord's death TILL HE COME." The coming again of Christ is the hope of the Church. This same Jesus shall come again in like manner as He went up into heaven. He shall come to be glorified in His saints, and to be admired in all them that believe. He said to His disciples, I go to prepare a place for you, but I will come again to receive you unto Myself, that where I am there ye may be also. Surely, the "LORD'S SUPPER" is a MEMORIAL of Christ. It carries us back and reminds us of the death of Christ on Calvary. It carries us to heaven and reminds us of what our Great High Priest is doing there for us. It carries us forward and reminds us of Christ's coming again in power and great glory. We need not travel outside the SCRIPTURES for clear views of the "LORD'S SUPPER."

The following question has frequently been put to me, *How often should believers receive the "Lord's Supper"?* On this point, I believe the Scriptures are perfectly silent. The passage in the 20th of Acts quoted in favour of weekly reception, does not to my mind prove anything of the sort. All that we gather from it is this, that on the first day of the week, the disciples were met together to break bread, and St. Paul being present, preached to them until midnight. I am inclined to think the passage favours Evening Communion, if it favours anything at all, from the fact that the Apostle preached until *midnight*. It does not follow from what is said in the verse, that the disciples met *every first day* of the week for the purpose of receiving the "LORD'S SUPPER." They may have done so, but we have no positive proof that they did. St. Paul says ;—"As often

as," &c. There is nothing said about *daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly, or yearly* celebrations. I believe that if we were all to adhere more closely to the Scriptures of truth, and less to the traditions of men, we should display greater wisdom in our sayings and doings. I am not aware that the Scriptures say anything about the *quantity or quality* of the bread and wine to be used in the "LORD'S SUPPER." There is nothing said about the *time* of the day unless it be Evening. There is nothing said about the *posture*, whether you shall receive the bread and wine *standing, sitting or kneeling*. Perhaps *reclining* is most favoured. There is nothing said about the *place where* you shall receive the Supper, whether in an upper room, a drawing room, a barn, a school, a chapel, or a church. There is nothing said about the *consecration* of the elements of bread and wine by a priest: nor is it said that the *presence* of a priest is at all necessary for the right administration of the "LORD'S SUPPER." The order of the Church of England is, that a priest must consecrate and administer. This is for the sake of decency and order, but not of necessity to the validity of the Ordinance. Nor do I think, there is anything to favour priestcraft in the "Prayer of Consecration" in the Church of England.

I honestly confess, that I see no Scriptural objection to a number of laymen meeting together in any place, and one of them offering thanksgiving and prayer to God, and then for all to receive the elements of bread and wine. To my mind, it would be a true and Scriptural administration of the "Lord's Supper." I fancy, some of my brethren may not agree with me, but this is of no consequence whatever. Now, suppose for a

moment, that the "Lord's Supper" must of necessity be administered by a priest in order to give it validity. What follows? Well, then you tie the Ordinance to the priest, which is the very essence of Ritualism and Romanism. I have a dread of priestly assumption, for when priestcraft goes up, the Lord Jesus Christ must go down. There is nothing in the Scriptures to forbid a layman administering the "Lord's Supper," and if he were to do so, I believe, that it would be as much a "Holy Communion," as if all the Bishops and Archbishops in Europe were present to consecrate the elements. Is someone shocked at what I say? If so, then let it be shewn from the Word of God that the *presence* of a priest is at all necessary when the "Lord's Supper" is administered. Our Lord has said—"Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them." Surely, such an assembly as this is a true Church. He would be a bold man to assert the contrary. But, if the two or three who make up this true Church, should happen to be women—Are they to be deprived the Ordinance? And if not, who is to consecrate the elements? No doubt, priestcraft will see its way out of this difficulty. I would, however, counsel every professing Christian Church, to act upon the advice of St. Paul: "Let all things be done decently and in order." Where the Lord Himself has not spoken upon a subject, let no professing Christian Church presume to dictate, for such dictation would be a MARK OF ANTICHRIST.

When I partake of the "Lord's Supper," I do so, as a *profession of my faith* in the Lord Jesus Christ, Who

by "His Cross and Passion" redeemed my soul with an eternal redemption.

"My soul looks back to see
 The burden Christ did bear
 When hanging on the cursed tree,
 And knows her guilt was there.
 Believing, we rejoice
 To see the curse remove ;
 We bless the Lamb with cheerful voice,
 And sing His bleeding love."

When I partake of the "Lord's Supper," I do so, as an *expression of my hope in the second coming of Christ*. "Ye do shew the Lord's death till *He come*." I am also reminded of Whose I am, and Whom I serve. I am bound over in service to Christ, my God, my Saviour and my King. I partake of the "Lord's Supper" as a *loving token of friendship and fellowship* with my brethren in Christ. How different is all this from that miserable system which tends to lead persons to a carnal priest, a carnal Ordinance, and a carnal Church. May it please God to lead us by His eternal Spirit from everything carnal both in self and systems unto "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever," that we may behold in Him, an infallible Prophet, an unchangeable Priest, and the everlasting King of Glory.

